

RICE BOWL BROKEN

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REFUGEES ON A SHANGHAI PAVEMENT

The rice bowl of these people has been broken.



# RICE BOWL BROKEN

*by*

MADELEINE C. MUNDAY

THE NATIONAL BOOK ASSOCIATION  
HUTCHINSON & CO. (Publishers) LTD  
BOUVERIE HOUSE, 154 FLEET ST., LONDON, EC4

First Published, January, 1946.  
National Book Association Edition, February, 1947.

#### DEDICATION

TO HENRY FUTRELL, Editor, *Yorkshire Evening Post*:

Because you wield your blue pencil with artistry and kindness,  
giving me the squarest of square deals, this book, as a token of  
grateful esteem, is yours.

*Printed in Great Britain at  
The Fleet Street Press  
East Harding Street, E.C4*

*Shanghai, flat city on the shores of the turgid Whangpoo, you have neither form nor comeliness, yet the great hearts of your population render you infinitely desirable. Here in exile I drink a toast of remembrance and good will to those in whose company I learned to live dangerously. Till we meet again!*

*Hongkong, Island of Fragrant Streams which have since run blood, standing now scared and with lights quenched under an alien flag, awaiting redemption, to you too I drink a silent toast salt with tears but prideful, because of my countrymen who dreed their bitter weird against the background of your ravaged beauty.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Shanghai Correspondent*, this book's original title, reflected years of pleasurable connexion with the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, to whose Editor I am grateful for permission to republish articles.

I also acknowledge with thanks permission from the Australian Broadcasting Commission to use material from talks given under its auspices.

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## CHAPTER I

### ON MY WAY

IT was a grand Long Leave, eight months! I had no idea then that it would prove my last. Servants of Shanghai's International Government took Long Leave on full pay every five years, and one's journey home and back could be planned to circle the globe.

So I left in December, 1936, on Shanghai's crack northern express just at the time General Chiang Kai-Shek had been kidnapped by Chang Hsueh Liang, and well I remember my irritation as a newspaper woman at being unable to buy any English paper as we travelled, and so find out what had become of the most important man in China.

The first part of the journey, from Shanghai to the Russian border, was the most interesting. Our train might be commandeered by the military—a commonplace affair—and we might be left to freeze on a station where the temperature was below zero. There was the prevalence of banditry, fostered by the Japanese themselves so that they might share in the spoils and at the same time claim an excuse for "protecting" the poor, weak, Chinese people. Our train was heavily guarded, but to my amusement, whenever we reached a station, the guards all got out first and stood to attention on the platform, with their backs to the train, and not one tossed so much as a look on the far side of the train, beyond which often rolling countryside stretched away into bandit country. . . .

At Tientsin the frozen ground was lightly sprinkled with snow. Between the everlasting mud huts of Chinese peasantry, long, low erections of new matting on a wooden framework were springing up. Soldiers in padded grey cotton or cloth uniforms swarmed out of them, swaggering at the prospect of imminent battle, and the stove pipes that stuck through holes in their miserably thin matting walls spewed out black smoke. Undersized donkeys and ponies, shaggy in their winter coats, plodded along under oversized loads. Their hoofs inadequately cut down, gave them a meretricious air of mincing damosels as they picked their way carefully between the ruts and irregularities of frozen mud tracks.

From the city of Shanghai to the Polish frontier, over a vast expanse of China and the U.S.S.R., except for a few great cities or townships passed through, we could not see a single paved road. Mud tracks without boundary, wall, shrub or drain, of the same level as the surrounding country, from which they could be distinguished only by countless hoof-marks beaten out into their surface by a myriad patient beasts, are the only path for the foot traveller. A single fall of snow suffices in a few hours to obliterate thousands of miles of highway.

In those mud villages, of course, electric light was a thing unknown. Well could one understand, passing through Pearl Buck's country, why the greatest of her books has a leitmotiv of earth. It is as though that substance permeates the very life and soul of the people. Their fields, planted with winter wheat or just about to be sown, lay heavy and chocolate brown under the dazzling sun; mud were their houses, mud their roads, mud the brick-kilns we saw farther north, and mud cones the everlasting graves that humped up ceaselessly; most of them surrounded by a mud horseshoe-shaped bank so that the spirits they shielded should face the way "feng shui" demands.

Amidst all this brown the faded blue of coolie cloth was almost lost; while here and there a bright peasant kerchief lent a note of gaiety to the monotone.

As the brown gradually faded under an ever-thickening blanket of snow, wheels slowly gave way to runners, and every soldier and peasant, however humble, wore an overcoat lined with uncured sheep-skin and a cap similarly lined, with deep earflaps fastening under the chin. This gave to all a wild and ruffianly appearance, to which uncouth sheepskin-lined boots or shoes, often home-made and laced with rawhide, added the finishing touch. All sorts of animals were jumbled together higgledy-piggledy; small donkeys and great oxen, water buffalo and shaggy ponies, toiled together at hauling or sunned themselves after their labours at the south wall of their dwelling.

The long journey stretched out. Regretfully I passed Peking by without stopping, but some day I shall go back. . . . Our train crossed the Yangtze on a ferry. Now the names of stations were all in Chinese characters and nobody called them out, and I was the only foreigner left on the train, dazed by the endless movement, but unwilling to tear my attention from what was going on outside.

Bandit and wolf country! Flocks of wild geese, dazzling white against brown loam, enormous black pigs, sheep, bedraggled hens scratching in the earth of last summer's rice fields. . . . Every village was composed of clusters of mud hovels turning their backs on the outside world, joined to each other by high mud walls, so that the stranger, approaching, found his only entry to be by a sunken mud path up through a fortified gate, flanked sometimes by square watch and grain towers closely resembling a Norman church. Soldiers passed us in an open truck, forty of them, at a temperature of 15 degrees below zero.

Hopei was a vast mud plain, only the inevitable graves heaving themselves up into endless little pyramids and a few ponderous mud-brick kilns and flat mud cities casting deep indigo shadows on the furrows, every crinkle of which was frozen into immobility for the long winter. Fences in this region were often made from woven kaoliang stalks, and every here and there, like slag-heaps in Yorkshire, rose high mounds of salt—a Government monopoly in China.

We were coming to the end of graves at last, but, as if to drive their lesson deeper towards the end, a doubly fertile crop appeared, each in its pathetic little community, the ancestor having the largest, and so on. It was as if the millions of human worms these represented over the vast surface of China, tired of life's futilities, had congregated their families and hastily each grubbed up a mound under which to creep and sleep. The frozen plain succeeding these gave harbourage to neither man nor beast, but at its fringe a final crop of graves marked a final small village where women and children were harvesting dead grass for livestock.

Manchukuo was ahead. At the time I was too sleepy to realise it, but the guard had folded its tents and vanished, and in some No Man's Land between Unconquered and Conquered China, our train had chugged on by virtue of a compromise reached. In other words, a Chinese train ran serenely into Occupied Manchukuo without disturbance to passengers. We were a rough-looking lot, but I kept quiet and nobody bothered me.

I was cramped and cold and weary and grimy. I produced my passport whenever required. My eyes smarted from dust and constantly gazing at the scene outside. A few Japanese got self-importantly into the train, watched with apparent impassivity by the race they temporarily ruled. One of them, a pleasant little man, came and talked to me, asking the usual questions that the travelling Englishman often resents. Where was I bound for? Where did I live? Was I staying anywhere en route, or travelling straight through? How



long since I had been Home? What was the nationality of the children I taught in Shanghai?

He had probably seen, before he spoke to me, the Japanese labels on my suitcase, betraying many visits to his own land; incidentally, he too knew Shanghai well and was quite able to check up on me had I dished out any falsehoods. So it was just as well I answered with civility and frankness. Not like one of my colleagues, an American, who once, in a spirit of mischief, announced her profession as "bootlegger," and mystified a whole little pack of Japanese investigators. We all thought her very lucky to get off, for had our little yellow gentlemen obtained a dictionary in which the word could be found, they would surely have arrested her.

Towards the end of our journey, as our train began to slow up, my Japanese tested my reactions with a little negligent remark. "A dirty train," he said. I swallowed the temptation to say the Chinese would be fools to run a smart train into enemy territory and, instead, agreed with him. Then I collected my rather tired wits. But the next train, I suggested, would be good, for would it not be Japanese? (This was actually not flattery, for Japanese trains are both punctual and clean.)

The little man smiled winningly, well-pleased. "Manchukuo," he corrected me, "with Japan at the back." We both smiled, for different reasons. The train stopped. He whipped out a card. "I am Mr. Fuji, Vice-Consul," he said. "I will tell the Customs to pass your luggage free of examination." And he was as good as his word. So I passed victoriously through the barrier on the same standing as a diplomat, Customs-free, and who shall say that I did not deserve the standing?

It wasn't as simple as all that, though. One big raw-boned fellow was most reluctant to let me escape, and as I had no contraband I did not really care. By this time the Tourist Bureau man had found me and as I handed my keys over to the Customs fellow he intervened.

"But Mr. Fuji will lose face if you open her baggage now," he said.

That, of course, was the true Chinese way of looking at it. So even Rawbones accepted the argument and let me go in peace. And sent a spy after me to find out as much as he could of this foreigner who had received the blessing of the hated Jap.

We were at Shanghai. A spotless train, with sleepers just big enough for dolls, waited at a siding. I meant to inquire if it had a restaurant car, but the spy stuck so hard to me that I had no time. How long and where had I known the Vice-Consul? he asked. I had to think quickly, for I was not sure which side he was on. Only later did I work it out that he was a real patriot spying for his own people. At the time I felt I did not want any harmful repercussions to strike my little friend Mr. Fuji just because he had done me a kindness.

I therefore made up some plausible tale of having known Mr. Fuji for several years in Shanghai, and I pointedly remarked that my job was teaching in an international school where we had pupils of every nationality, including Japanese. Then, tired though I was, I decided I really must turn away his interest into some other channel or I should become too involved in a tissue of lies. So I rounded eagerly on the long-haired youth and at long last let slip the question I had had in my mind ever since I had left Shanghai.

"Please tell me," I begged, "I have been so long away from news. What has happened to General Chiang Kai-Shek? I was so anxious when I left Shanghai. . . . Is he all right? Safe?"

"Yes," answered my spy, quickly, "he has been released, and has gone home. Quite safe, yes." Then his expression changed suddenly. "You, a foreigner, you are interested in our General?" "Of course!" I answered, "we all admire

him. He is a wonderful man. Oh! I am so glad to hear he is safe!" My spy relaxed. We chatted happily until the train started. Rather funny, when you think of it, right under the Japs' noses, the two of us praising Chiang. . . . But there wasn't any restaurant car after all, and I had a headache, so I ate some of my "Siberian train" rations, swallowed an aspirin, and turned in. . . .

The chilliest time of the entire journey was my arrival at six of an iron-cold morning at Mukden. Two gigantic porters in padded garments of red and blue, with fur circlets around their ears, held in place by black elastic under the chin, shouldered my luggage and got it to the Left Luggage office for me, though our knowledge of each other's language was sketchy in the extreme. Theirs was the northern dialect, and what we use in Shanghai is entirely different.

Breakfast in the Manchukuo State Railway restaurant warmed me, then I sallied forth into the deadly cold to see how people in Mukden live.

The streets were covered with trodden snow packed into rutted and pitted ice, over which stumbled and slipped little Mongolian ponies with matted coats and very badly-cut, ill-shod hoofs. Some of them had yellow matter running from their eyes, and I understood why when I saw one of them slip and fall, and his master beat him about the head with a cruel whip-handle. The poor beast merely flinched and turned away as far as possible. He had made one attempt to rise but the treacherous ice beneath his feet provided no foothold, and in any case his cart was loaded with sacks of coal which had fallen forward nearly on to the shafts and until the coalheaver had shifted these loads, as he was ultimately forced to do, it was impossible for the little beast to struggle up.

Men, women and children, rickshaw coolies, drovers, the poorest of the poor, were all muffled up to and down to the eyes against the bitter weather. On every bicycle and rickshaw handle were lashed huge waterproof muffs lined with fur or padded, and covering also the bar to which they were fastened. To touch uncovered steel at a temperature of from 35 to 40 degrees below zero which obtained that morning with bare hand would have been to leave one's skin behind as from a burn.

A street scavenger was plodding bent-backed on his way, his long iron pickers swathed under his mittened hand. Out of the basket fastened to his back stuck the ungainly carcass of a dog, frozen on the pitiless streets that night, gaunt with hunger, but able in death to provide food for humans only a few degrees less forsaken than it had been. Seeing that wretched freight I called to mind those other wonks I had watched, scavengers of the rail, haunting every train, gnawing frozen slop from the steelwork of the undercarriage. Wise with bitter knowledge, they moved off as the train gathered momentum, and kept out of human range.

I think it safe to assert that every two-legged human from Harbin across Siberia and Russia to the Polish frontier wears, during the winter, valinky, or soft skin boots reaching often higher than the knee, and lined with thick wool or sheepskin. In colour they range from a light grey to a dirty yellow. The peculiar aspect of these boots to me is that they appear to have no flat secondary leather soles, and step softly and comfortably on the snow, like a well-lined mocassin. They much resemble a shorter boot used for curling at ice rinks in Switzerland or Scotland. The cheapest pair when I went through could be bought in Siberia for only twelve roubles, at the real valuation of the rouble this priced valinky at three shillings per pair!

Having a few purchases to make in Mukden, I spaced them out so as to allow me to warm up for a few minutes in various shops as I walked along. Japanese or German or English served in turn, and one of my buys was a leather cap with sheepskin-lined earflaps, later to do duty in Switzerland for winter sports. I met little Japanese boys hurrying to school with school-bags and skating boots strapped to their backs.

Japanese boys, yes. Very few Russians. Russians were making themselves scarce in the conquered territory of Manchukuo. And this was significant, for the Russian, bred in a hard school, was apt to hold on longer than any other foreigner. He could lower his standard of living almost to the level of the oriental's, bargain like an oriental, put up with dirt and squalor and noise. . . .

Poor White Russians of the East! Their odyssey has been almost as sad as that of Europe's Jews. Over the border into Manchuria when the Revolution drove them out; competing with natives; turning their hands to thankless jobs. And gradually emerging as a race of individuals, highly intelligent, musical, passionately dramatic, animal-lovers. A vibrant race, dynamic. . . .

And then the Japs moved in and slowly, cunningly, closed all avenues of trade to the outsider. Where should they go next? Shanghai indeed beckoned alluringly, for there a great colony of White Russians had almost turned Frenchtown into a suburb of Moscow. But, in the long run, who knew whether or not the wily Jap might not progress as far as distant Shanghai? Well, the alternatives were emigration overseas or return to the fold as Reds. . . .

I heard the same tale again in Harbin, of Russian departures, indeed the Japanese Tourist Bureau man himself gave me, with pride, the figures of decreased Russian population. As in Korea, Japanese administer; there is room only for underlings otherwise.

Returning to the heated station, I found in the small ladies' room several Japanese men, sitting and smoking at ease. The main waiting room was full and, being lords of creation, they saw no reason why they should not overflow. Women stood while they sat.

It is often said that you may judge of a nation's civilisation by the way it treats its womenfolk. As I sat there I contrasted in my mind the Chinese and Japanese attitude to the weaker sex. Never, never would even the humblest coolie intrude upon the privacy of a woman, if he were Chinese. Indeed, the beautiful manners of our Far Eastern allies are a joy, and often shame us. And my mind darted to a little Japanese doctor I had met, whose wife always humbly followed a couple of steps behind him, carrying his little black bag. She only preceded him to open a door, or kneel and take off his shoes ere he entered; she would lay out his instruments for him, and disinfect them. . . . In short, she was the ideal Japanese wife. And he brought home as many other women as he liked. . . . Such is the fate of women under the New Order in East Asia.

Well, I sat and watched the endless stream of humanity, and marvelled yet again at the tenacity with which Koreans cling to their peculiar white national costume, though the children flaunt cheap gay colours after the Japanese model. There were babies in sleeping-bags, like Indian papooses, soldiers, countless soldiers, well and snugly equipped, officers, bustling and officious.

My humble giant porter, one of the conquered Manchurians, led me to the platform of the famous Asia train. This streamlined monster could not reach the maximum speed of which it was capable until the whole track had been relaid, but it glided smoothly and effortlessly into the station and was extremely comfortable to travel on.

That same night we reached Harbin, where we had our last bath for ten days. A night and half a day had to be spent in Harbin to connect with the Siberian express from Vladivostok. This gave us a chance to wander round a city of great buildings, lavishly and solidly built with double doors and windows and lofty painted ceilings and walls in the Russian style. All these generous mansions have been divided and subdivided in the past and let out to different families as workrooms and living quarters.

One of the greatest Russian faults is, to my mind, uncleanness. On the surface things are attractive, lace-covered, ornate. But below the surface, in their kitchens, at the backs of their houses—dirt! These remarks are based

on my experiences in Shanghai, by the way, not on a few stray impressions gathered while passing through Harbin. Of the oriental races, the Japanese are the cleanest, though I have frequently thought that the abundance of fresh water in Japan is responsible, and that our friends the Chinese are, considering their difficulties, comparatively cleaner.

However this may be, in Harbin the Japs had hit upon a way of remedying the menace to public health caused by uncleanness and slovenliness in any race. The city was divided into districts. Each district would be notified in turn that a certain given day was to be its "spring cleaning day." On that date every scrap of furniture had to be stacked up in the fresh air outside the house, and Japanese inspectors entered and carefully scrutinised every corner of the denuded dwelling ere they permitted the goods to return!

Manchurian fruit vendors stood by the roadside with muffled baskets, exhibiting on top a single apple or orange, which they sacrificed to the inclement air in order to attract custom. Messenger boys towed all kinds of gear behind them mounted on a couple of planks for runners; on reaching a slope they rode their improvised sledge and pushed off with a stick. Russian beggars harried me as I passed. And even as I pitied them I could not help reflecting that, in spite of disapproval of Japanese aggression, one had to concede that certain long-projected improvements, much talked of during Chinese administration, but never tackled, had been quickly and efficiently introduced by Nippon; for instance, the sinking of artesian wells and a consequent improvement in drinking-water supply.

We passed over the broad, frozen Sungari River as we left Harbin, and our train was more heavily guarded than ever, about twenty soldiers travelling in each coach. In the piercing cold outside muffled figures swayed in the air mending telegraph wires brought down by a cold spell of fifty below zero. Indistinguishable though their features were, I gathered the impression that they were Japanese.

In the previous summer, at Tokyo, Jimmie Cox of Reuters had told me of the tremendous sums spent on Manchukuo, of the reluctance of ordinary people to forsake their land for this new one unless they were offered "white collar" jobs. . . . Of the failure of most colonisation schemes except under force. Watching our soldier guards eating at the expense of the State Railway, and the countless others on duty at each station, I wondered how impoverished Japan really was by her conquest. Much of the money she had set out to wring systematically from the conquered, and Japanese soldiers were well known to "live off the land." Little did I then guess the extent of Nippon's ambitions!

Nearer the frontier still we passed through a military zone where, under pain of death, passengers were forbidden to look out. Blinds were drawn, but I, of course, must needs take a peep from the lavatory window, only to see a procession of Manchurians receiving at the hands of their overlords a yellow-swathed portrait of their puppet king. . . . There were fortifications, too, here and there, pill-boxes to guard the line from guerrillas. And that was all; hardly worth the risk of one's life to see. . . .

My only bad moment came at the frontier station, Manchouli. Because here they took away my writing case in which I had notes on the journey. Fortunately my scrawl must have defeated them, or else, more likely, with Japanese duplicity they concentrated on what appeared innocent, and promptly collared all my bright pamphlets on Italy, Capri, and Switzerland. I had hoped to beguile the long trans-Siberian hours with these; however, with a shrug, I accepted their loss, realising my real luck in that the notes had not landed me into prison.

When we finally boarded the Siberian express we found it in semi-darkness parked, as if for ever, in a siding. It was a dirty-looking contraption of eight

coaches. We were very hungry and tired, but owing to differences between "Tokyo time" and what was presumably "Kremlin time" we were forced to wait ten hours for our supper. Meanwhile a good deal of smoking and chaffering went on between border folk and the train crew; in fact one gathered the impression that private trade of all kinds was being negotiated, and that we should jolly well have to wait until it was completed.

Meanwhile the few foreigners travelling had fraternised. A young German couple and their small son Robert; a young Japanese representing Mitsui, on his way to England, a tall Italian airman and myself. We were a mixed lot, but symbolic of our time.

The Germans did not like the idea of going to Nazi Germany, which they had never seen, but the Japs had edged them out of Manchukuo, and they had nowhere else to go. The Jap we all suspected of being a spy, especially since it transpired his passport was visa'd only for Berlin, though he insisted with smug assurance that "once there they would fix up his English visa all right." As for the Italian, he disliked the Jap intensely, for he had to share his sleeping compartment, and was always being subjected to a sly and constant stream of questions. In consequence, he took refuge with me, and then told me he had been selling planes to the Chinese and was travelling on a diplomatic passport. . . . No wonder the little Jap was interested.

I will pass over the trans-Siberian trip rapidly, for it has been done many times, though not often in the depth of winter. We ambled along over an abominable track at about thirty miles per hour, and at each station we rushed into our thickest clothing and poured out on to the platform for air. We watched women, harsh-looking and sturdy, hacking with picks at the snow frozen between the sleepers, dragging buckets of coal along the ground to replenish the stock in each coach separately, watering the train, restocking the beer and vodka. Used as I was to the average White Russian woman of Shanghai, these toil-worn specimens gave me a jolt. They had lost all vestige of womanhood.

In Moscow we had a guide, a young woman who spoke fluent English, although she had never left her country. I duly observed, under her tutelage, the huge Museum Against Christianity, and immediately asked to visit it. She made some excuse, but, tantalised by the building's name, I asked her what it contained. She didn't know. I have often wondered since whether that gaunt edifice has not been turned into a hospital for wounded, and have imagined dying men fixing their dimming eyes on some holy ikon held aloft in that unhallowed place to comfort them in their last hour. . . . War plays grim tricks.

The other gigantic buildings for culture were also inaccessible for various reasons, some of which I suspected to be manufactured on the spot: but my chief criticism would rather be that Stalin had built these before housing Moscow's four million inhabitants in suitable surroundings. Several pieces of information did intrigue me, though. "Rents are assessed according to our wages." And when I exclaimed "What! Do other people know how much you earn?" my guide replied, "Of course, why not?" That rather stumped me.

Then I found out it would take two months' wages to buy her husband a new suit. "But this is because England assesses our rouble at such a low figure, to help her trade. The price of English cloth is too high." I thought that was rather a smart way to explain away the low purchasing power of the rouble abroad . . . though not exactly cricket.

There were still an awful lot of queues, for buses and trams and for making purchases. But Moscow was gayer than at my first visit, people were being allowed to buy Christmas trees, though not to celebrate Christmas, only the

New Year. Churches were open, too; and more people went into them than into the great new museums.

My guide repeated several times that nobody much visited churches, and when I queried this she went silent with rage for several minutes. Later she told me solemnly that everything that was old in Moscow was bad, but everything new was the best in the world. We were sorry to waste some time going on the newly-built Underground, which, while handsome enough, had after all only three stations; but it was so obviously Moscow's pride and delight that we pretended enthusiasm we did not feel. Finally, however, I was brought up against the guide's assumption that no other nation had such a thing as a moving staircase. "Why!" I exclaimed, "we even have them in Shanghai."

She eyed me coldly. "But you do not have any Underground railways in Shanghai; you already told me."

"We don't. But we have the escalators in big stores."

It was quite obvious to us all that she just didn't believe me. And when I left Moscow I was still mulling over in my mind her mixture of naïveté and competence. Yet, as she had been selected as guide for foreigners she must have had a high standing. Truly, our nation is not the only one to have been misled about others. . . . Those who are so enthusiastic about Russia at the moment should study her recent history and learn about her treatment of Ukrainian peasants before passing definite judgment.

She stood up against German brutality because she herself has a core of brutality. She weathered hardship because hardship is no stranger to her. The stubbornness of peasant masses is hers. "Scratch the Russian and you find the Slav." . . .

And it was only when I was drawing away from Moscow that I learned that their cherished Underground railway and subways had been built by English workmen specially brought over for the job, Russia having no specialists in that line. . . .

Also I still hanker to know what one puts in a Museum Against Christianity?

We jogged along to the Polish frontier. At Niegoreloye, on the border, a waspish woman examined our baggage. She motioned us to tip everything out, and when we hesitated to mess up our packing, she seized the cases and spilt everything higgledy-piggledy on to the counter. "Workers of the World Unite" said the slogans on the wall, and huge murals showed handsome reapers and factory workers at their toil.

Behind the sho-wasp stood two wooden-faced soldiers. So drastic were her delvings among the personal belongings of the little Jap that she pricked her finger on a tie-pin. We, looking on, chortled. Next came Robert's mother's cases. Her neat little work-box spilled out, and the point of a pair of scissors stuck itself under the nail of the searcher. This seemed too good to be true. Everyone held their breath when she came to me. And hanged if she didn't run one of my needles into her hand. She spat out what I presume was the Russian equivalent of damn, the faces of her two wooden soldiers cracked momentarily into a grin. However, after all that, she found no contraband, and no false bottoms to our luggage, so had perforce to let us go.

At the Polish side we duly admired Poland's lovely uniforms, the nice clean train, and tucked into a rattling good meal. In Berlin masterful males elbowed me, a mere female, into the gutters and Winter Help collectors shook their collection boxes threateningly under my nose until, in English, I exclaimed "I'm not German, I'm English." Really, to be taken for a German *hausfrau* was a little thick!

And, in Berlin, I duly made a purchase planned months before in far Shanghai. As a newspaperwoman I had promised myself one of the best

cameras I could get. There were only three Zeiss Ikonta Supers in Berlin when I bought mine, and I paid the equivalent of £28 for it. This almost cleaned me out. I found myself desperately calculating my expenses to journey's end.

Because we had left Moscow twenty-four hours late, I would be arriving in London on a Sunday. Desolation faced me unless my sister could meet me. I wired her from Holland, but was not sure that the wire would reach her in time. Had I sent it off from Berlin it would have cost me over a pound at the artificial value of the Reichsmark imposed upon us, and I only had three pounds left.

This precarious financial position of mine caused me to do what I have never done before or since, smuggle my camera through undeclared. I literally did not have enough money on me to pay duty, so I wrapped the thing in my travelling rug and hoped for the best.

Ye gods! That was the most drastic Customs inspection I have ever seen, in England or anywhere else. I am sure some special contraband was being looked for. I stood and watched person after person go through it, and realised I was at the very end of the line.

On my left a little Jap stated he had nothing to declare. The searcher pulled out a camera. "That'll be ten pounds," he said. "And I'll keep the camera. Here's a receipt. You will appear at court at ten to-morrow morning."

He turned to me. Now I am a bad liar when I have not had time to prepare my lie, and I had no idea what form the question would take. I braced myself, feeling guilty as hell.

"Now, have you anything in your baggage that comes from abroad?"

"Everything I have comes from abroad. I'm from Shanghai, came overland via Siberia. This is only my small luggage. The main stuff's gone via Suez."

He must have been tired, or the magnitude of my proposition overwhelmed him. For he chalked me through, and I found I had put over the one fraud of my life without telling a lie!

## CHAPTER II

### CAPRI, BANFF, HONOLULU

GIVE any journalist eight months' holiday and ticket round the world, and put a new camera into her hand, and I defy you to say she won't deviate from the allotted journey. It's a most exhilarating feeling to say to oneself "I'd like to go to winter sports. If my pay won't stretch to it I can write some articles"—and to do it and find it works. Besides, in my case England greeted me with cold and rain.

So first it was Wengen and a month's skiing and lugeing, next Paris and its dear familiar haunts, and lastly Capri. And I shall always be glad that I saw Italy, and especially Capri, before Mussolini had hitched his wagon to Hitler's tail. As it was, my gaze was caught by a magazine showing on its cover two heads in profile, like those of a royal couple on some medallion; in the foreground, King Victor, and cheek by jowl, Mussolini. Underneath ran the caption "The Emperor and the Emperor-Maker."

One of the charms of Capri is that it is not Italy. In Naples excessively amorous natives could not even allow a woman of my ripe years to gaze unmolested into shop windows; the station master was not prepared to release

luggage detained by mistake unless I spent some time in dalliance. (Fortunately an officer with clinking sword called upon him unexpectedly and effected my release unintentionally!) So I was scarcely prepared for the unaffected friendliness and kindliness of Capresi. I suppose I should add that the inhabitants of this island are not pure Italian; incidentally their good looks are said to be due to the fact that an Irish regiment once garrisoned the place, which we occupied during the Napoleonic wars!

To think of Capri is to recall a breath of perfume from orange and lemon trees; to vision once more geraniums spilling down over ruined limestone walls centuries old, an enormous lilac tree framing the distant Bay of Naples, and brown, curly-haired natives carolling love songs unaffectedly as the spirit moved them. A handful of noisy brats squabbling in the dust, and a visitor urging the mother to quell them. Her face, rendered beautiful by tenderness, as she replied "What would you, signora; there is trouble enough later; let them play!"

I remember, too, Capri's innumerable flights of worn steps, used long before the two roads now existing were even thought of. Built into the walls alongside, every here and there, are niches, painted azure, colour of the madonna, and in them a statue of the Virgin and Child or St Anthony, and before the statue a handful of drooping marigolds in a cracked bowl. Towards one side is a wax nightlight, unlit, and a money-box.

On week-days these shrines are locked, though at night the peasant in charge opens them and sends her children to gather a fresh bunch while she lights the little wick. Nothing is more charming than to come down such steps in the dusk, with the lights of Naples a triple fairy necklace across the sea, and suddenly, rounding a corner, to find one of these luminous little niches, its blue background, as you now perceive, strewn with golden stars, its fresh flowers a warm blur, and the Virgin's gentle face coming to life in the soft flicker. . . .

There are, too, the 533 ancient Phœnician steps leading from Capri to Anacapri (Upper Capri), at the top of which Axel Munthe built his famous house, which bears, in black mosaic on gold, the legend "San Michele."

It is empty now, a show place for visitors. Perhaps they pestered the great doctor, so that he fled from their importunity; or the blinding white of lime-washed walls threatened his impaired vision. In any case he lives in another part of Anacapri, and the five lira entrance fee goes to the poor of the island.

Or used to go. Poor Capri will be emptied of visitors now, its hotels and pensions turned into sanatoria for wounded soldiers. German officers will strut and bully, and the free Capresi will mutter under their breaths, for they never liked German visitors, even in the old days, and will like them even less now they come as masters.

As I look back, it was not so much the island with its clear air free from dust, and its new cottages growing out of the ruins of long-dead emperors' palaces, nor the gay woodwork reflecting the spirit of its peasants, one window pink, one green, one red, another yellow, and the door scarlet. . . . No, it was the people themselves, so human and lovable and tolerant, with a courtesy underlying their every action, born of old culture inbred. These crowd my memory and, though politics label them enemies, I recall them only with tenderness. . . .

In spite of Mussolini's slogan painted on the new arm of Capri's little harbour "Molti nemici molto onore" (Many enemies much honour), the friendly people of Capri were almost childish in their affection for English visitors, and their contempt of Germans.

I can see them still, the party of seven Prussians that came to my little hotel, noisy, self-centred, demanding the full attention of the whole small staff. They arrived at night, and as the "bad boy" of the guests, Renato, remarked with



disgust "Not one of them young or good looking." . . . Poor Renato, whose sole theme was love, so that he and Andrea, the waiter, would get so involved in argument that we other guests would have to wait for our food until the discussion was over! But on that one night of our visitation by northern Germans, no one got a word in edgeways.

They ate and drank copiously, their faces and necks growing red. The generously piled-up fruit made them exclaim "How many are we allowed each? This is the best thing in Capri."

My mind glanced briefly, with irony, at the Blue Grotto, the Natural Arch, the Faraglioni Rocks, Tiberius's Palace, none of which they would see, since they had arrived that night in pouring rain and would leave at seven next morning. Capri was a favourite resort of Goering, so they must follow in his footsteps. But actually all they savoured was a plate of fruit, and afterwards they would read the rest up in Baedeker.

It was a Sunday and all shops closed; nevertheless our rowdy visitors, replete with food and wine, demanded cigarettes and postcards and stamps, and, as Andrea slyly confided to me afterwards, inscribed the cards with fulsome words of praise for the beauties of Capri which they had not seen.

It was while they hogged it in the centre of the room, that I intercepted signals and mocking glances from other guests and discovered that Andrea was in it too. Soon we were all enjoying ourselves at the strangers' expense. Andrea was actually proprietor as well as waiter, and it was only natural that while he suavely acceded to his guests' demands, his innate pride should revolt at their bad manners.

Then there was the new hand at the hotel, who joined as the season advanced. A real country bumpkin, with huge pointed ears sticking well out on either side of his head, tousled black hair, brown eyes like a faithful dog's, big clumsy hands, and one leg shorter than the other. We called him "Asinello" at once, because of his ears.

The hostess, Andrea's sister, took a dislike to him, as Italians are prone to do when people are physically unattractive. "We only got him to meet the boat" she apologised to me. And poor Asinello limped sheepishly and rather miserably about the place, doing nothing in between boats, for several days.

Then he began to take hold. He proved that, like the donkey we had named him after, he had the qualities of perseverance—stubbornness, if you will—and willingness to labour. On his own he found a broom and began to sweep the yard, the corridor, the sitting-room. He mended the hotel radio with a hairpin when a guest broke it. Clumsily he came and helped wait at table the day we were overcrowded. He ran messages; nothing was too much trouble.

When he met the boat he was always shoved to the tail end of the line by more enterprising porters; but he made up for this by hanging on to the very end, catching odd visitors who had been slow to decide or involved in arguments on board. When he had to return without anyone he wore a sorrowful, hangdog expression. But even trudging up the little steep road back to the hotel he would, if he saw anyone in trouble, stop to help or direct them, sometimes carrying their bags, but never waiting for a tip.

He was pleased when they gave him mail at the post office and would tell me with a happy grin that I had letters waiting for me. Once when it rained he stood patiently on the dock without a raincoat and thus brought in a fine haul of people who had found no other hotel represented when they landed. And so in the end he made good, and though we still called him Asinello in fun, there was affection in our tones, too, and we discovered that he owned a name of his own, Vincenzo.

Then there were the donkey boys, whose photo I had taken one day, and whom rumour had told that I would give them each a copy if they posed for me. As there was no photographer in Capri, only a studio where they developed and printed for visitors, my stray portraits were more valued than I had realised. We had arranged, a donkey boy and I, that on the following Sunday I would meet him at the Villa Tiberio, to which he escorted visitors with his donkey, and there hand over his print. I had also snapped the Villa's custodian, and he had impressed upon me that I must be there by mid-day, as on Sundays he went off duty at that hour.

The Sunday came, but my studio had let me down, and the prints were not ready. It was a long climb uphill to Tiberius's palace merely to convey apologies, but I like to keep my word, and at about quarter to twelve I rounded the corner of Villa Tiberio on to the shelf of land below the ruin, only to find three donkey boys, an old lady who dispensed drinks dressed up in peasant costume complete with tambourine, and the guardian in Sunday suit and white kid shoes. All these expectantly gazing down the track, ready for my coming.

I still shudder to think of the disappointment I would unknowingly have caused, if I had not turned up, as I so very nearly did not. Luckily, I always carry a good supply of film, so I set to work and posed my subjects against various backgrounds.

By the time I had done, my hotel lunchtime was over, and I wondered how I should manage. But I need not have worried. In his soft voice, mixing a few slow German words with Italian, the guardian was explaining to me that on Sundays, when he went off duty, his friends "*molto brave*" came up from Capri to picnic on the ruins. Here they were, he said, and would I stay and lunch with them?

That was the most unforgettable meal I have ever eaten . . . cooked by the bank manager and chief tailor of the island, whose hobby was cooking, and washed down by red Falernian wine, grown on the very hillside on which we sat. My host and I ate a little apart, because the others considered it more correct, lest the party grow warm with wine, and we shared a plate, for I had not been expected. In a little grassy nook in the sunshine, high up amid the ruins of a long-dead emperor's palace, ringed with flowering cacti, wild roses and broom, with green-flecked lizards for company, Vesuvius and Naples seventeen miles away, and far below the little harbour washed by a dreamy sea. . . . Ravioli stuffed with chopped egg and herbs, meat rolls with fresh green peas and fried potatoes, English trifle superbly cooked. No host could have been more courteous, nor indeed better looking; for Fortunato had the proud features of an old bronze medallion, and though I suspect he had but two suits to his name he was utterly content. Nor could one have wished for more beautiful surroundings. Nowadays, when I read of bombs dropped on Naples a breath of nostalgia sweeps over me for the peace and simplicity of the friendly isle, and I recall that even Mussolini, author of the "many enemies much honour" slogan on the harbour arm, also, in softer mood, called Capri "*l'isola che non si scorda mai*."

For once I am in agreement with him. To think back on Capri is to find one's spirit bemused with perfume of blossoms and syringa; to hear once again snatches of tenor song up the darkening road; to glimpse the natural arch of the Faraglioni rising from blue Tyrrhenean waters. To eat and drink and toil and make love and be happy; that was all this lovable people asked of life. Yet, because of one man's ambition, life has brought them a far different fare from what they sought.

And still, amid the bombs, I find myself murmuring Mussolini's words "the island one never forgets." . . .

The page will be darkening soon. That, I suppose, is why I am prone to

linger among memories of Capri, of the leisurely trans-Atlantic trip and of Banff, finally of Honolulu, where sped the last sunny days.

On board my *Empress* ship was a man in tweeds, wearing his hair long and pinned with hairpins above each ear. He had a massive, tanned and benevolent face, and was eating a rice dish not on the menu. While my fellow-passengers fought shy of him, I talked because in Shanghai one man is like another, no matter what his nationality. And lo! the exotic one turned out to be none other than a Mohawk Chief named Oskenton, who specialised in singing his national songs, and lecturing on his own people. He was on his way back from a tour in England.

That was a most interesting encounter! Once a poor boy who had kept life in his body through the bitter Canadian winter by dragging rabbits he had snared twenty miles on a sledge to sell them from door to door, he became later usher in the New York Opera House where he earned money for singing lessons. When I met him he had a trusty Ford with him, and was anxious for a world tour. I knew, in Shanghai, an impresario who would be likely to arrange one for him . . . but war intervened and these plans were never implemented.

The acquaintanceship, however, provided me with an unusual experience. For I stopped over in Quebec one day, and spent it sightseeing in company with the Chief. In other words, the hospitality of the country was extended to me by a gentleman from the race of those to whom the country first belonged. Friendly voices greeted him as he superintended the unloading of his car. "How y' are, Chief? How many times 've you made the trip now? Thirty-six? I guess y're good f'r thirty-six more."

On our last days we had had a concert, and the Chief had appeared in full regalia, and his rich voice had filled the saloon, and all the women had mobbed him. It rather tickled me to be carried off at the last, and my chief regret was that I couldn't listen to wagging tongues of those more interested in others' business than their own.

I learned that day that, in Canada, when you order an item on the menu, as in the States, bread and butter, and coffee or tea, is supplied with it. The English way of doing things must seem awfully stingy to Canadians. I also found out that, while still on board, steaming down the broad St. Lawrence, any passenger could check through to the next stopping place a reasonable amount of hand luggage and my paraphernalia had gone on to Banff to await me, while I had a look at Quebec and the Niagara.

I had expected Banff to be fashionable and overwhelming. What a relief to find it the friendliest, most easy-going little beauty spot one could imagine! Behind me were four and a half days of comfortable train journey by C.P.R. (I had taken good care to obtain a seat in one of the air-conditioned coaches, since the temperature rose to 98 degrees at Moose Jaw and 106 degrees at Medicine Hat—lovely names!) I had learned with astonishment that there was not yet a completed road right across Canada from east to west. In the Winnipeg district, when I had exclaimed at the scarlet and yellow of men's shirts I had learned that woodsmen preferred bright colours because it prevented accidental shooting. At Banff, too, however, where no shooting is allowed, because the whole district is a game preserve, cheerful colours were much in evidence.

I wandered among the sprawl of single-storey shops and log cabins and found myself in the main street, Banff Avenue. Here I asked to be directed to stables. I was told to round the next corner and ask for Ike. No surname, just Ike. I swallowed my astonishment and did just that. But Ike sent me on to Bill, where I found what I wanted.

The residential streets are all named after animals: Muskrat Street, Otter Street, Caribou Street, etc. And no wonder. On my first afternoon I watched

a resident wrathfully chasing elk from his front garden, and a mother bear with two cubs grunted their way across Otter Street before I could run for my camera. All gardens have to be fenced.

Of course I made my way to the animal paddocks, two miles out, at once. But on my way I was continually haunted by the impression that some rude little boy was following me, whistling shrilly to make me turn round, and lying low so that I couldn't spot him. It wasn't a boy, however, but a whole succession of ground squirrels, funny little fellows who pop up from their burrows and chirrup shrilly as they see you coming, pop down again if you pause, and then cannot bear to stay underground while so many exciting things are happening above, so up they come again, like jacks-in-the-box, sitting on their haunches to get a better view.

Four miles out from Banff is a great refuse dump where char-a-bancs take visitors in the evening to watch bears. Unfortunately, as the animals grow, they become more vicious, and drivers have strict orders to keep their clients from going too near. For a photographer this was galling. Several shaggy brown creatures, not half-grown, were in range of my camera; but I focused my attention on a big black brute who kept well out of range, and weighed well over four hundred pounds.

To discourage me, I was told tales of bears in that district. One driver of a private car, nearing the bridge, had found his path obstructed by a full-grown bear, who got up as soon as he saw the car stop, ambled to the window, and thrust in his paw, begging. Having no food to give him, our motorist slowly closed his window until the great hairy paw had to be withdrawn. An angry slap at the window conveyed Bruin's displeasure before he waddled off to intercept his next victim!

As soon as I discovered there was a Stampede going on at Calgary, back along the trail I had come, my journalist's itch would not let me rest until I had visited it. The rodeo was certainly something to write home about. Ropers from the whole of Canada and America gather at Calgary for this affair, and many of the bucking brones used fetch more for their intractability than if they were docile. The cowboy only has to ride his steed for ten seconds, when a horn is blown. During those ten seconds three judges watch, one to each leg of the cowboy and one to the nag. They are mounted, too, of course. To win a good percentage the horseman has to rake his mount several times fore and aft with his spurs, to hold the reins in his left hand, flourishing the other, and to keep both feet in the stirrups. If he draws a tame horse and cannot make him buck, he asks for a re-ride. Most good buckers come snorting and squealing out of the chutes, twisting corkscrew-fashion as well as bucking.

One collided with the ten-foot fence behind which I was taking snaps, and somehow threw his rider clean over to our side. What's more, the young fellow landed on his feet, and with one sweep stuck a cigarette into his mouth and lit it almost before his feet had touched the ground. This nonchalant gesture earned him lots of applause and roars of laughter.

Wild steer riding was somewhat similar, only there was the danger of being gored. In bucking-horse riding the rider is usually lifted off his bronc by one of two outriders whose only job it is; but in wild steer riding the lads have to look after themselves as the steer will often turn nasty and chase everything within sight. I was told that one of the outriders in the wild steer riding contest had a wooden leg strapped to the saddle. "But if he falls?" I asked. "Terry don't fall" came the laconic reply.

Later that evening I read some of the local journealese accounts of the Stampede. The way these were written made me feel small. Never, never could I rise to such heights of expression as these! Some still stick in my memory. "Silver King (name of bronc) had labour trouble and went on a

sit-down strike with Jim Richards"; "Jack Running Rabbit (an Indian) unloaded from his steer in a hurry and sat down with the steer on top of him"; "Nick fanned high and fancy, to scratch out day money without dispute." This last refers to the fact that all prizes are in money, and the cowboy who makes the best percentage for the day gets a special prize.

Visitors to the Stampede included three sheepherders on an eleven weeks' trek to Vermilion Lake, near Banff, whither they were moving 1,200 head of sheep from drought-stricken pastures of Saskatchewan. With only two sheep dogs those men claimed to have progressed at a rate of thirty miles a day without holding up traffic, leaving the herding to their dogs while they rode in their waggon. They started at dawn and travelled until the sheep lay down in the heat; and covered a second lap in the cool of the evening. When they reached their destination sheep and men would have covered six hundred miles.

I spent happy days on the Echo River with my camera, paddling a quiet canoe; watching beaver steal out at evening, catching the sudden blue gleam of a kingfisher, listening to the single call of the Solitaire from his high perch in a tall larch. Sometimes a herd of elk, startled, with upflung heads, took to flight and streamed out of sight. Banff National Park now covers an area of 2,585 square miles, which embrace mountain ranges, glaciers, waterfalls, emerald and azure lakes, warm sulphur springs; in short one of the loveliest playgrounds in the world.

Came my last evening. I loaded my camera with a specially fast film, gulped down an early meal at six, and set out quietly for a stroll which became a fast walk as soon as I was out of sight. You will know where I was going, of course. To get that photo of a big black bear at the dump; but this time without companions or guides to stop me.

Bright-eyed inquisitive gophers perched on the edge of their burrows as I passed, chirping shrilly as if in warning; a pair of yak staged a giant fight with clashing horns, but I would not tarry. At dusk, as I knew, bears whose existence had remained unsuspected during the day, came padding out of the surrounding forest, making for melon and canteloupe thrown out on the dump. On this my last evening I had no companions to disturb the peace; it was not excursion day and no cars would be there. Having been all my life a lover of animals I knew I could keep still enough to give them confidence if they saw me.

But when I reached the spot I could have cried with rage. A gang of drunken hooligans with dogs was wildly chasing bears through the forest, against all laws, and I stood at the top of the dump with my useless camera, for not an animal was in sight. . . . Soon it would be too dark.

Not until nearly eight o'clock did a moving shadow detach itself from a distant clump of firs and make its way hesitatingly towards me. I caught my breath. Somehow I had known all along that I would get his photograph, that big black fellow who had kept so far away from humans on the first day. Obviously he wanted to escape his tormentors, and his only path lay right past where I stood. So I adjusted the camera and waited. "If I see him get up on his hind feet it means danger" I said to myself. But he didn't; just paused at about eight feet away so that I could focus to a perfect snap, and then, as I stood aside, plodded on past me into the security of distant woods.

Over towards the Far East for which I was bound the war clouds were already darkening. Japan was preparing for another thrust into China's flank, assured that we in Europe were too uneasy about Germany to interfere.

San Francisco had a hotel strike on, and my hotel was picketed and I had to go to another, taking meals out. On the first morning as I sauntered abroad looking for an eating place I must have worn a lean and hungry look, for an Oriental, Japanese I think, slowed up and offered me a meal. As I quickened

my steps with all sorts of thoughts of white slave traffic jumbling themselves up in my mind, I could not help grinning too because he had thought me (at my time o' life) sufficiently attractive to bother about! Finally, as I breakfasted at a counter I heard the young fellow behind it explaining to a pal what a curse these strikes were. He detailed job after job that he had successfully filled, only to be forced out on strike for some slight grievance felt by someone remote; having a young wife to support he threw up these jobs as soon as strikes were declared, and found others. Now he was temporarily anchored at half his proper pay behind a quick lunch counter.

One thing that intrigued me about Frisco was the horses. Mounted police would canter up, drop their reins, leave the horse standing, and dart down a side street. The traffic too seemed to me wild, everyone appeared to be dodging the green light; a pedestrian was hard put to it to cross the street.

The final holiday phase of my leave was to be Honolulu. Like most people I thought, before I went there, that I was about to visit the island of Hawan, pronounced, by the way, Hah-Vy-ec. Wrong again. Honolulu is on the island of Oahu, and the biggest isle of the eight, Hawaii, is a night's journey away. One thing I did know: that there is an interesting inland country where cattle-breeding is carried on, and I wanted to see it. But there I struck a snag in island communications. Without a car, either hired or private, I could not reach the cattle country, and had to content myself with a promise of return at some distant date.

The mixture of breeds on the island fascinated me. It was very much like Shanghai in one way; only the intermixture with true island races made the various blends almost impossible to distinguish. At the time of my visit the majority of inhabitants were Japanese, out of 384,437 islanders at the previous census, 148,972 were Japs, and only 21,710 of pure native descent. This fact set the States a very pretty problem. As the Hawaiian Islands are incorporated territory all taxes go direct to America, but taxpayers have no representation or voting, although they have, in the past, clamoured for recognition as a forty-ninth state, seeing that their tax contributions outweigh those of twenty-one accepted states.

Although most people who have lived long in the islands love them and the life there, racial and political feuds still spring up at odd moments, and with Japan preaching a New Order in East Asia it would scarcely have been wise to raise to the status of citizens of the United States that Jap majority. Indeed, events at Pearl Harbour on 7th December, 1941, proved the Nipponese spy system to have been very complete there.

I was intrigued to find that there is a Church of the Crossroads in Honolulu which, every week, holds a service under the auspices of some different religion; Jewish, Gentile, Mohammedan, Taoist, Buddhist, etc. Also Chinese and Japanese inter-marry quite often. The prettiest mixture is said to be Hawaiian-Chinese, for the fine texture of Chinese bones tones down a tendency towards coarseness in true island figures. Thus the prettiest hula dancers are Hawaiian-Chinese, and the famous Royal Hawaiian orchestra has scarcely a single full-blooded Hawaiian in it.

The tempo of island life is agreeably slowed down to suit the climate, and the lei fashion threads through every phase of social activity. The boy friend throws a ginger-flower lei over his best girl's shoulders as he calls for her; sitting behind a young woman at the pictures one is suddenly conscious of a most delightful perfume; she is wearing a lei. Island boys and girls tuck any blossom, particularly the hibiscus, in their hair, behind their ears, with a complete lack of self-consciousness that is in itself a charm. Similarly attractive is their habit of strumming on the ukelele until the very rhythm they create calls forth response from someone among their audience. No matter where

you go in the islands, give a dark lad or lass a uke and sooner or later you will find a little throng of dancers swaying and singing in perfect and poignant harmony.

Once I saw an island lad singing plaintively to himself under the moon, and quite by chance, heard his story. Not for a dark eyed lover did he sigh, but for a rollicking little pal given him by some kindly Americans, a fox terrier called Rockne. Dogs are scarce and expensive in the islands, because there is a four months' quarantine, and strays are shot on sight. There was, however, some slight flaw in Rockne's pedigree, and he was given to an Hawaiian lad who worked at the Moana Hotel, and counted himself happy in owning nothing but a surf board, a few pairs of cotton shorts and a battered ukelele.

He trained Rockne to ride on his surf board, and I have seen photographs of the little fellow, ears flapping in the wind, jaws agape, coming in on his master's board. They say he would whine to be taken out, running from the long piece of polished koa wood to the lad and back again.

But someone stole Rockne, and must have smuggled him away on a transport, for he has never been heard of since. So that was why his master, heartbroken, used to take his instrument at night and sit apart under the tall palms, singing his grief to the stars.

In hula dancing the swing of the body represents the swaying of a tree in the constant trade winds, and the hands and arms weave the story. Verses of songs accompanying them are usually so numerous that one of the performers calls out at the end of each verse the word with which the next one should begin. Hulas end with both feet and hands together, bowed head, and arms extended before one slantways to the ground—in olden days a salutation to royalty.

Many of the songs glorify old island heroes, notably thieves. For in the islands a clever robber held the respect of every man. In fact, it was partly because of thievery that Captain Cook lost his life in these very Sandwich Islands (as they were then called) during a dispute. The favourite Legend of the Marvellous Thief gives a good idea of island mentality before the coming of Christianity.

The final scene of this legend is when King Umi arranged a death contest between Iwa, the hero, and the six best thieves in his kingdom. Two huts were set apart for plunder that night; one for whatever the six thieves could collect, and one for Iwa. The people, in panic, set about hiding all their goods.

That night Iwa turned in and slept. The six thieves, as they stole to and fro on their business, saw him and pitied him. Towards dawn, their hut being full, they prepared a feast, ate and drank, and fell asleep. Whereupon Iwa rose, stole all the loot from their hut and transferred it to his own, finally creeping into the king's hut and stealing the tapa sheets from the royal bed for a covering. At daybreak the six were put to death and Iwa became a national hero!

The last one hears as one sails away is, of course, the haunting "Aloha Oe" (Love to You, or Farewell to You), of which the modern version was written by ex-Queen Liliuokalani. And, followed by these plaintive notes, I headed straight for war.

### CHAPTER III

#### FRIDAY, THE THIRTEENTH

THE superstition held good, for on that day I embarked on the *Empress of Canada* for Shanghai, and war broke over that city. At the outset I did not worry much. I had been through the 1932 war there and anticipated an even swifter victory for the Japs, who would be able to profit from lessons

learned in the previous campaign. Like other "old China hands" I knew the Chinese as a pacific race, never, in all their history, fighting to annihilation point, and always, in the long run, absorbing their conquerors.

While I felt sick at heart at the blow struck at a nation only half-awakening to patriotism I had no inkling of the way it would weld the great majority as no amount of slow propaganda ever could; giving them, it is true, a creed of hatred, but forging it with the fanaticism of the bitterly wronged.

General Chiang Kai Shek, until that decisive moment, had always avoided sending his own troops against the Japanese. Actually his intention had been to build them up until they were strong enough but now his hand was forced and he made his great *morituri te salutamus* speech: "We may not win, but we can perhaps ultimately exhaust the enemy." With the Chinese habit of seeing in years not days he cast his mind forward to essentials. Meanwhile we who sped towards the conflagration recalled the Nineteenth Route Army's famous stand in 1932, ill-equipped though they were, and anxiously we thronged round the bulletin board.

Many of us, Chinese and whites alike, were bound for Shanghai. None had reckoned on an unexpected extension of journeying or provided funds for such an emergency. Most of us had bank accounts in Shanghai, but banks there had temporarily closed. Mail and cable communication with the port was cut.

Gradually, by a roundabout system, some Shanghai firms managed to convey messages to their employees aboard; one message took three days, being ultimately relayed from San Francisco. The main idea seemed to be British employees to Hongkong and Americans to Manila. By that time both ports were reported cram full of refugees, and to make matters worse, cholera and dysentery had broken out in Hongkong.

I had already decided as a journalist to run that seventeen-mile gauntlet of the Whangpoo River on the tender that would meet us at the estuary, since it was unthinkable that our great liner should endanger all her other passengers for the sake of a small handful still determined to reach their original destination, when a dramatic announcement on the notice board put a stop to the plan:

"Notice has been received from the C.P.R. Hongkong that the *Empress of Canada* will not call at Shanghai. Cargo for that port will be carried on to Hongkong. The ship will proceed to the mouth of the Whangpoo solely for the purpose of taking on board refugees for Hongkong and Manila.

Will passengers booked to Shanghai kindly notify purser forthwith if they wish to land either at Yokohama or Kobe."

I found it difficult to make up my mind. Sure, it's preferable, if you've got to be a refugee, to be in your own country, or at least among your own people. But on the other hand, we MIGHT get back to Shanghai reasonably soon, and, for those who knew Japan, it was a cheaper place to sojourn in for an indefinite period than Hongkong, where the local dollar had a considerably higher value than Shanghai's currency. Besides, to stop over in the Land of the Rising Sun would give me a glimpse into the war from the aggressor's side, and, in any case, the journey down the Chinese coast with a thousand refugees on board, some wounded, held little attraction.

Meanwhile, as I hesitated, our crew of five hundred Chinese had wasted no time. From the day we left Honolulu they had toiled at rehearsal of a play which they presented, followed by a feast, to steerage passengers (all Chinese, too) at 1s. per head two nights before reaching Yokohama. All profits were destined for Chinese troops, and in the fierce new spirit of patriotism gripping the nation, I am convinced every penny of that money went to its proper



destination. The play began at 8 p.m., lasted till midnight, and the meal was not washed up before 4.30 a.m. At 5.30 every one of those men was up and ready for the usual full day's work.

Their masters, the white officers on board, were no less indefatigable. Courteous as C.P.R. servants always are, I was to realise they were good fellows in a jam. Every man rose to meet emergency quietly and efficiently. The ship had to be prepared to receive a thousand refugees, some wounded. Each doctor and nurse from among us was tabulated and medical stores were overhauled. Sleeping space was measured out on the floor of saloons, smoke-room and deck. The Head Steward, in answer to a suggestion from me, said "No necessity for rationing, Madam. Every C.P.R. ship carries six months' supplies." There's efficiency for you!

Consoling speeches were made by their fellows to all Britons short of cash. As refugees they would surely be catered for by the British Government and helped to acquire quarters and food until they obtained access to their own funds. The names British Government and British Consul became beacons in our wilderness.

At Yokohama I discovered that my decision had been practically made for me by my friends. Both couples I knew were on the wharf with offers of hospitality. We had docked unconscionably early, so their presence was a true indication of friendship. I elected to stay with the Coxes (Jimmie Cox of Reuters, later to be driven to his death in Tokio by Japanese persecution), and when I saw the hastily prepared room, and another "for your writing" I had a lump in my throat.

However, next day when I visited the Acting British Consul at Yokohama I was told by the janitor (no one else appeared to be in the building) that the great man was busy. I couldn't even induce him to make an appointment to see me later, though I stated I was a Shanghai Englishwoman stranded unexpectedly. I thought of all the others stranded far more drastically than I, and hoped they would meet with better treatment at the hands of whatever representative of the British Government they happened to find.

Intrigued by the apparent determination of this man acting in lieu of His Majesty the King, I decided to check up on the attitude of bankers to people like myself. As I had accounts in two different banks in Shanghai, I called at both. One refused to cash a cheque until communication with Shanghai was re-established, the other courteously informed me that in times like these my bank would naturally do all it could to help, and how much would I like? I registered a vow to bank with that firm to my dying day.

Arriving in Japan from the outside world one wondered whether one had suddenly gone crazy. On board we had received impartial news of Shanghai warfare showing that a dauntless stand was being made by Chinese troops trained and equipped beyond expectation. That shells falling into the International Settlement and Frenchtown mostly had Chinese origin was due principally to the dispositions of the respective armies. The Japs, with a keen appreciation of their strategic advantage, had used the International Settlement as their base, and were fighting with their backs to its protection. Their ammunition and reinforcements were largely brought up through this protected area.

Shanghai newspapers showed the population carrying on in the old inimitable Shanghai way. A brewery situated in a hot spot was advertising that it still supplied unlimited beer. A lonesome bachelor pleaded in the personal columns for friendship with a young woman of independent means "as a refuge from boredom." With bombs and shells falling in the Settlement boredom sounded somehow wrong. . . . A polo match on the Racecourse had to be abandoned under a hail of exploding shells. This paper, a copy of the *North China*

*Daily News* which had slipped through the strict Japanese censorship, showed the battle line undented.

Yet Tokio and Yokohama sheets were in amazing contradiction to the facts known to the outside world. No one was allowed to publish anything but "news" issued by the Nipponese Foreign Office and Domei, the official news agency of the country. From time to time even leaders were compulsorily dictated to English-edited and owned papers. Had they refused, they would have been closed down.

I waded through masses of verbiage like this:

"This country has no territorial aspirations in China. All China has to do is to go on quietly with her occupations and leave her policing to us. We will afford her innocent peasantry, now shamefully oppressed by war lords, our disinterested protection. Unfortunately foreigners do not sufficiently understand our purity of motive. It is up to British residents here to make it clear abroad that we are only working for the salvation of China."

Truth was indeed effectively muzzled in Japan. The battle line did not appreciably change; shiploads of dead and wounded came in daily, until later these were diverted to Korea and Formosa so that the population could not know their numbers. Even educated Japs sighed for English newspapers at times.

For the time being only Japanese ships called at Shanghai, and as the Jap Admiral Hasegawa had forbidden foreigners to return, it wasn't any use trying to sneak back. Tokio was oppressively hot. I thought, even then, that Jimmie had been left quite long enough on his particular job. A newsman's beat in Tokio is not an enviable one. Impossible to get any angle but the Japanese. Or if you did get hold of something you could not use it. After a time, being constantly fed with Nipponese propaganda and getting a distorted view of everything led to despondency, frustration. No man whose job is news ought to be left in such an impossible job for long.

I remember particularly that it was from Jimmie that I heard the worst inside stories of Jap prisons. How even Japanese boys were arrested and tortured because their friends had been accused of communistic sympathies. Some disappeared for ever, and some were allowed back to their families to die. One lad of fourteen had perished thus after returning, of a ruptured intestine, in consequence of fiendish handling while under question. I heard of prisoners chained together in rat- and vermin-infested cells, and when one led the way to the latrine, having dysentery, all must perforce follow.

Yes, Jimmie Cox knew too much about Japanese prisons. When he was finally arrested in 1940 this knowledge of his, coupled with a warped view of what was happening in the world outside—warped only because of his too-lengthy stay—must have dictated the desperate expedient in which he took refuge. To Jimmie's fastidious soul Japanese imprisonment must have spelt the ultimate degradation which he was not prepared to face. Add to that a probable conviction that British prestige had suffered so much that no diplomatic pressure would succeed in extricating him. A spy he certainly was not. Indeed I remember he purposely took an office in the same building as the police, in order, as he told me wryly, that, with their master-keys, they might have easy access to his papers and thus find him innocent.

Melville James Cox, as they called him in his obituary notices, was, in the fullest sense, a gentleman. Always urbane, apparently imperturbable, he held the fort in Tokio for Reuters until the thankless task defeated him. The

only good I can foresee from his death is that his office may have learned thereby never to keep a single representative too long in such a heartbreaking post.

But I am anticipating, for at the time I stayed with the Coxes in Tokio no inkling of what the future held came to any of us. There was some social gaiety, tempered by the heat, but I escaped the confining influence of the city as soon as I reasonably could, and, on the plea of heat, took refuge in the mountains. At the little mountain resort of Hakone Machi my correspondence was less likely to be interfered with than in Tokio.

The story current just then in diplomatic circles was of an Englishwoman who closed a letter home with these words, "I cannot write more at present because of our little friends." Two days later she received a polite note from the Postmaster, "Dear Madam, you are quite misinformed in supposing that we censor your letters. We do nothing of the kind."

I joined forces with a colleague and her daughter at Hakone, to share a bungalow for which we had nothing to pay. It had been rented for the whole summer by Hongkong folk who had packed up and returned at the first whisper of war. We ate at a little inn where I had often been a visitor, swam in the lake, walked, and wrote letters. No echo of war reached the friendly little place. In Tokio almost every street had been decorated with cheap flags and coloured paper streamers, to indicate that from that neighbourhood someone had left for the front.

In Japan twelve hours is given a man called up. He is supposed to be feasted, and accompanied to the station by his pals, still mechanically flag-wagging and shouting banzais. If he fails to report within the twelve hours a squad of soldiers calls grim-faced at the wooden shack he calls his home and without waste of time or words shoots the defaulter dead.

But Hakone was so small, its inhabitants so few, that except for newspapers and letters we might have ignored the war. My colleague indeed was extremely fortunate, for she received her husband's mail regularly, direct from Shanghai on a fast Jap liner, bearing a Japanese stamp, and not once opened or tampered with. Likewise some of the English papers posted to her in the same fashion got through to our amazement, sponsored, as it were, by the Nipponese themselves.

This is how it had happened. They had been holidaying in Japan and Hubby had insisted on rushing back as volunteer fireman to the conflagration even before our friend Hasegawa had thought to forbid such return. Upon arrival he had telephoned his Chinese servant from the dock and said, "Boy, Master talkee. My wantchee fireman coat, boot, everything for fire, you savvy?"

Now the Boy had had no information that his master was about to return, nevertheless his attitude illustrated why we residents of the Far East swear by our Chinese servants. In an injured tone he replied, "Sure, Master. My have makee ready, have puttee bed. You wantchee something more?"

George, having attained his object of jumping into the midst of the trouble with both feet, was promptly ordered to Yangtzepoo, an area over which the battle had swept, only to become a No Man's Land between the two opposing sides. Practically the only advantage of being allotted this particularly dangerous beat was that he had access to the Japanese post office almost alongside the wharf. I suppose it never entered the heads of the Japs that one of the handful of foreigners crazy and gallant enough to squat between two opposing armies for the sake of putting out fires started by both sides would have the cheek to use their sacrosanct post office for writing to his wife in Hakone and even posting anti-Japanese news right under their noses. Amusing as it seemed to us at the time, the foolhardiness bites deeper later on, as one looks back.

Nevertheless the net result was that Winnie, his wife, Jean his daughter, and I were able to read first-hand of his hairbreadth escapes, and obtain a

lively picture of what he and his little gang were doing. I have tried to persuade George to publish his letters written at the time, but he won't, so I take this opportunity of saluting a very gallant gentleman, and of acknowledging my debt to him in the material I am using. I am glad to say that as I write the trio is in Sydney, having been on leave when the Pacific erupted.

In 1932, at a previous time of trouble in Shanghai ("We have trouble here every five years," an old hand told me laconically upon my arrival), many Chinese employed by the Fire Brigade had refused to function in areas of excessive danger. Since then, retrenchments of white personnel had been forced upon the Council administering the International Settlement, and in consequence every volunteer was worth his weight in gold. Once more Chinese had refused to enter Yangtzepoo, so foreigners, Englishmen, alone fought their desperate battle, six men to a machine instead of twelve, clad in shirts, shorts, gumboots, and helmets, drenched with water and sweat, floundering among putrefying corpses left unburied, scaring off clouds of scavenger flies; cursing, shouting, and on their return shovelling down a large plateful of rations provided free by the Council.

Besides the Volunteer Fire Brigade, unpaid of course, there was also another band of unsung heroes, the Shanghai Volunteers. The original purpose of this band was to defend the foreign settlement, principally against Chinese, for in the old days, once British merchants had developed an unpromising mud flat into a thriving city, the original owners of the land had shown a sometimes uncontrolled desire to step in and grab.

In the 1937 war, however, the Volunteers, besides manning their specified defence posts, had to undertake all sorts of odd jobs. Each man did forty-eight consecutive hours on duty at the beck and call of anyone requiring an escort into some danger pocket; refugees asking to be evacuated during a temporary lull, owners of ponies, dogs or cows trapped and needing release. Even during the next forty-eight hours off they might still be asked to turn out in an emergency. When I read accounts of the effete Englishman in the Orient I think of George and our Shanghai Volunteers. . . .

In the Yangtzepoo area where lay most of the wharves, certain sacks of flour and rice, priceless because of threatened food shortage, had been left lying when coolies fled in panic; so Volunteers went on foraging expeditions through an intervening hell of battered buildings and shell holes, to rescue them. Others were to be seen presiding at sinister bonfires, wearing improvised gas masks; members of our Health Department cremating on haphazard funeral pyres countless bodies of unknown dead. One particular gang had the beastly job of cremating many hundreds of dairy cattle, bombed from the air by Japanese, and apt to cause disease if left unburied.

Even within the still intact portion of the Settlement much destruction had been caused by ill-directed bombs; the death toll among Chinese alone in the French Concession for a single week amounted to 2,200. Chinese boy scouts had been of utmost assistance, testifying to the good influence of China's "New Life Movement" which was just getting under way when the Japanese fell upon the country. I was to see those youngsters myself later, and testify to the manfulness with which they stood up to their heavy responsibilities.

A skeleton crew of police also penetrated into the devastation of Yangtzepoo, not so much because there was any known population to control, but in order to assert the rights of our International Council over the area which, to judge by Japanese actions, the little yellow gentlemen had every intention of filching. I should explain that the fighting had raged to and fro over Yangtzepoo, indeed at the outset the Chinese had almost driven their opponents into the sea; but they had not acted decisively in solidifying their gains, and the Jap fleet had

come in with reinforcements and added its great naval guns to the fray. At the time I write of, the Chinese had again been forced back, but were making a grim stand pivoting on North Station, and there was no appreciable alteration in the line for months.

Meanwhile the Japs held the south bank of the wide Whangpoo River, landed their supplies there, and paid little attention to the northern bank and the country running back from it, which was still held by the Chinese. Any ship coming up the Whangpoo, therefore, plied between two opposing fires, and any public servant functioning in Yangtzepoo ran the same risk of cross fire. Thousands of flimsy Chinese dwellings had been smashed when Jap warships had fired point blank at the land, and most Chinese who had fled into the intact portion of the city had not the courage to return. By devious means they would discover the name of some white man scheduled to penetrate the danger zone, and beg him to look at their former dwellings to see if they still stood.

Small tobacconists, newsagents, thifty, hardworking, peaceable men: to almost all the reply had to be "There is nothing left." Indeed among the rubble human habitations were almost unidentifiable.

Each little band of returning white men took up its residence in some oasis surrounded by desolation; camping in some building less cracked than the rest. Because it was not possible to buy supplies by ordinary means scrounging became the order of the day. Ravaged fields supplied vegetables; a few squawking hens could be rounded up after a long chase; and the pig triplets which George's fire engine carried back to "camp" set up such a squealing as they rode towards the cookpot that the firemen dispensed with a siren!

A gang of Gasworks employees had their legs mercilessly pulled because the cow they proudly drove into their compound turned out to be a bull. . . . Lean dogs and cats gravitated more or less of their own accord to the various oases at the smell of food. One enterprising electricity man, having scrounged beer from the wreckage of a shop, recollected the ice factory nearby and found it intact, guarded by a faithful Russian watchman. In exchange for tobacco the latter parted with three hundred pounds of the best machine-made ice, and lent a hand truck for cartage. That night electricity employees dispensed with a bath, because in it were stacked beer and ice in heart-refreshing layers.

No lights were allowed at night by belligerent Japs in the temporary quarters occupied by various public servants, although authority over this area still was supposed to be vested in the Council of the International Settlement. Men marooned in the stifling heat of those miserable concrete buildings were deprived of all the palliatives to which they were accustomed: mosquito nets, electric fans, iced drinks. Normally they would be changing their clothes several times a day and handing them to their servant with a casual "Boy, talkee amah wash."

As excursions into the comparative safety of the non-belligerent part of Shanghai were rare, each man had to see to his own washing as best he could. At day's end, pyjamas would be donned, and daytime shirt and shorts dropped exhaustedly into a tub of cold water. Some time during the hot, sticky, mosquito-infested night, a weary form would get up with a groan from his camp bed and wringing out his "washing" peg it up to dry. On the occasions when one took a few hours' leave he was saddled with everyone else's messages and dirty clothes, and he didn't get much leave after all.

On September the first the Japanese issued an order. No single Chinese was to remain under any pretext in the devastated area. Anyone disobeying would be shot on sight. White men stationed there reading the order, shrugged. A few shrinking creatures had been glimpsed from time to time lurking among

the ruins, flattening themselves into the landscape with fear, chameleon products of war. It would not take long to clear THEM out!

But such is Chinese tenacity, and perhaps desperation, that no fewer than ten thousand, gibbering with fright, laden with heartbreaking bits of salvage, now came forth like rats from their holes, at the bidding of their overlords.

The Shanghai Volunteer Corps manned trucks and evacuated them, but so terrible was the refugees' cowardice that their women and children were pushed aside and trampled underfoot at first, in a wild rush for the trucks, until the Fire Brigade kept the males at bay with a hose, instilling into them our Western idea of civilisation, "women and children first."

Not only Chinese were refugees. Then and since, I have often pondered the plight of Shanghai's poorer white, or half-white population. Many Eurasians lived in Yangtzepoo; it was cheaper. They constituted the petty bourgeoisie of the port, and were mostly clerks and shop assistants. Invaluable in their own way, for they not only spoke fluent Chinese but understood the mentality of our neighbours as we did not, nobody much bothered about them when war disinherited them. Many of them were British through their fathers. And I have reason to know that even those to whom, for the sake of some formality unfulfilled, we denied a British passport, showed as passionate a loyalty as any of us: enlisting in the Volunteers, standing staunch in defence of the birthright we denied them.

Meanwhile we sojourned peacefully in Hakone, untouched by this war perfidious Japan had launched upon a diligent race of fellow-Orientals. We watched the women and children go into autumnal colours, to match the first tinge of scarlet invading the maples, and the brown and orange of foliage and fruit. On rainy days we lit our charcoal hibachi and huddled round it, though the fumes gave us a headache. Fuji had donned her first mantle of snow, and every little village boy played at soldiers with furious concentration.

We read about Japanese heroism, about "comforters" who toured safety zones behind the front distributing scarves and so on to Japanese warriors, until the thrifty public began to inquire into the cost of such excursions, and they ceased. We made contact with other Shanghaianders stranded like us in the Land of the Rising Sun, heard that So and So had had her flat looted, calculated that sooner or later the Chinese would retreat from North Station and in so doing bring our western portion of the Settlement under fire. Under our apparent resignation lay a feverish desire to get back to our homes and household gods.

I used often to go on solitary sailing excursions in the little boat hired by the inn for the summer. The momban (boatman) was, though I could never explain how I knew it, a friend of mine. Perhaps because there lay between us that fellow-feeling shared by all those who go down to the sea in ships. In my case it was only a miniature craft on a freshwater lake, but gusts of wind driving suddenly down from rifts in the encircling mountains made sailing just interesting enough to be worth while, and if anything went wrong, one could always manœuvre into shore, tie up and walk home.

The momban was an exceptionally quiet man. He went around wearing an open-necked shirt and shorts, his bare feet thrust into cheap straw sandals. He would mend tackle, catch bait for eager little boys, rescue unhandy visitors, scull out and pick up oars dropped overboard from the dinghy, and do odd jobs about the bungalow. Once a Japanese girl from Tokio took out the little sailing boat and by nightfall had not returned. At eleven a speedboat, the motor-ferry and the momban in the dinghy all set out to look for her. It was, of course, the momban who found her.

Using his common sense, he rowed to the western side of the lake, whither the prevailing wind would be liable to drift any inexperienced sailor, and there, bobbing against the shore, scarcely drifting, was the little white yacht. Wrapped in the mainsail, fast asleep, lay the lone voyager. She returned ignominiously in tow behind the dinghy at 2 a.m. Telling me the story next day with the usual economy of words, the momban met my eyes and smiled. No comment: but it was as if we two sailors had remarked "Those landlubbers!"

Although he was a bachelor, he was very fond of children. Once, clearing the bed of a torrent splashing past our bungalow, he made a water wheel for ten-year-old Jean, and the brave little bamboo contraption went on gaily turning after he had gone forever.

He had been a soldier ten years previously, in North China, conscripted, as they then were, one in every three. His old regiment, the Tagami, had suffered heavily in the recent Shanghai fighting. Being on their reserve list, he was liable to be called up at twelve hours' notice.

Knowing of this, he changed; grew more silent and solitary than ever. He would make excuse to get away from the inn, and I would see him squatting by the purling water, puffing at a cigarette, contemplating his own lonely thoughts. From what I knew of him I guessed that his gentle nature revolted at the slaughter before him.

For finally the telegram came, late one afternoon; and he sat silent among his cronies at the inn table, his bare toes twisting uneasily in his cheap straw sandals, his dark eyes quick with pain.

Soon a smart car drove up, and our innkeeper motioned him within. Shocked, humble, he drew back. He had to be pushed inside, where he sat on the edge of the seat, ill at ease, our host next to him, a little errand boy, and our host's brother. Off they jerked, and the guest of honour, catching my glance, waved forlornly as he was swept from view.

Next morning at six he was on his haunches lighting the fire for our bath as usual, when I handed him "a present." From his squatting position he bowed and thanked me. After breakfast he had already gone. Japan had called up one more "hero."

He did not survive long, as I think he knew he would not. Only a few weeks after I had returned to Shanghai myself I opened an envelope with a Japanese stamp and out fell a likeness of the momban with a letter from the innkeeper telling me he had died in the fighting not three miles from my door, from a shoulder wound.

## CHAPTER IV

### SHANGHAI SHAMBLES

MEANWHILE Shanghai's trade was dislocated. Merchants to whom goods had been consigned were notified by advertisement in local papers that their effects had been dumped at Yokohama, or Hongkong, or Singapore (when these other ports became too congested). After which the shipping companies washed their hands of further responsibility.

In consequence of the bombing from the air of the *President Hoover* as she waited at the estuary, the majority of passenger liners gave Shanghai a wide berth. Let us do justice to the two nations which alone kept up their services; the Italians and the French; their crews demanded and received heavy bonuses in compensation. I also take off my hat to those intrepid little ships the China coasters, most of them flying the red ensign; for they kept chugging in and out

of port as usual, running the dangerous gauntlet of the Whangpoo River, bringing supplies to the beleaguered city.

A fortnight before we made our own surreptitious return, we read of a disgraceful scene at Kobe, where forty Americans, having disobeyed Consular regulations and boarded the Messageries liner *Chenonceaux*, found themselves confronted with a consular notice threatening them with five years' imprisonment or a fine of \$2,000 gold, if they sailed. Some of them then tried to get a refund from the French, and failed, as the latter rightly pointed out that the notice given of cancellation was too short.

Between the devil and the deep, these bold spirits decided to chance their luck, but no sooner had they sought their cabins than their presence was demanded in the saloon, where American consular officials claimed their passports, annulled the China visas thereon, which had been obtained and paid for some months previously, and threatened with Japanese police persons refusing to hand over their papers.

Fifty per cent allowed themselves to be intimidated, and slunk ashore; one brave soul, Mrs. Don Chisholm, hid under her berth complete with passport and thereby triumphed; twenty sailed defiantly without visas. Two children, in consequence of the ban, were left stranded in a strange port at 2 a.m. and had somehow to find accommodation. As anticlimax (only we who read of it didn't know till later) Shanghai produced no passport inspection at all, for all Chinese passport officials had fled, and the bold twenty who had sailed visa-less landed unmolested.

Indeed, when we too left on the *Andre Lebon*, we merely called Admiral Hasegawa's bluff and walked aboard with the minimum of self-advertisement. It was to be a visit of desperation, an attempt to put some order into our affairs, rescue important papers, and if the war went on until Shanghai collapsed, pack up and get out with what we could save. I had my dog too to rescue; he had stayed on at my flat in charge of the Boy.

The peace and tranquillity of Yokohama harbour, with its quaint fishing craft and cargo boats going about their various ways unhindered, and Fuji serene in the background like a faint snow-dusted shadow, was in strange contrast with the Yangtze estuary and its sinister guardians like gaunt wolves ready to pull down their prey in the guise of anything Chinese, however innocent, coal freighter, rice boat, or fishing junk.

The Woosung Safe Anchorage, named in better days, used to be where vessels waited when benighted or to pick up their pilot. It was some twenty miles nearer shore than the *President Hoover* when bombed, and the coast was a long dark streak off our port bow when we hove to at nightfall. Something else materialised, riding without lights almost alongside, and our French sailors grumbled at anchoring so close to a belligerent apt to be bombed. Before turning in we watched great flashes across the low spit of land: rosy flares against a dark horizon, signifying fires caused by bombing, yet heard not a sound owing to the contrary wind: ghostly guns and ghostly bombers, setting the imagination at work ere we slept with ports tight closed lest shell fragments strike us in the night.

Dawn showed us, not only our Japanese neighbour of the night before, but a whole pack of grey wolves crouched about the wide estuary. With a freshening breeze came valiant coastwise freighters, their sides and top awnings painted with giant Union Jacks, bridges and decks sandbagged. Passing us without slowing, guarded only by the precious badge of their nationality, these seaworn vessels of Jardine Matheson, Butterfield and Swire, and the Moller Line beat on up those seventeen miles of hazardous river laden with supplies. Meanwhile we, aristocrats of the sea, waited, while our cargo and luggage were loaded into lighters.



Finally a silvery hull slipped out of the Whangpoo mouth and made towards us. The *Savorgnan de Brazza* brought with her a full complement of evacuees for Hongkong, Sargon and Europe; these came aboard after transshipping into a small tug. Like us they had a single piece of hand luggage each; many of them, beaten by the unforeseen, had heavy luggage in lighters and were leaving for good.

Well-dressed business man carrying a leather wallet, thin haggard Chinese woman with babe in arms and small boy clinging to her gown, temporarily equal, with the irrevocable decision taken and the past thrust behind, and an identical look of fatality stamped on their features. . . .

“So on the ocean of life we pass and speak one another,  
Only a look and a voice, then darkness again and a silence.”

Next the few who were going back jostled for the deck of the tossing tug; as a Frenchman said to me “it was very wavy!” Mainly we comprised Chinese refugees from Japan, betraying the country they had long inhabited by the gay faded fuoshkis (large coloured handkerchiefs) enwrapping their belongings, and the fact that they carried their children Japanese fashion, strapped on their backs.

We started cutting through the yellow water, flinging up clouds of spray, and soon we were observing, with cold horror, the ruins of what was once the prosperous and teeming village of Woosung.

Not one house had been left intact. Ruins, empty, silent; crazy compilations of brick gone askew; four cadaverous supports and a half roof, no walls; a drunken row that had lurched sideways; a tall chimney stack with a shot clean through. Here and there an advertisement hoarding “Drink Ewo Beer,” “My Dear Cigarettes.”

Now and then a thin line of khaki troops, a lorry, and all the way up Japanese destroyers and gunboats, with washing hanging out to dry, saluting us as we passed, for the *Savorgnan de Brazza* was a sloop of the French navy and entitled to naval courtesies. All the long thin guns aboard the Japanese were pointed over towards Pootung on our port side, or skyward ready for enemy aircraft. But Chinese raiders were already reduced to using darkness for their activities, being woefully outnumbered.

Silence on our left. Pootung was not strafing that day. Later we were to share Shanghaianders' joy at the antics of the Chinese hidden among bamboo groves at Pootung, who constantly shifted their artillery and gleefully watched Japs wasting shells pumping them at the wrong spots. Far over at our right Jap bombers were at work, swooping on undefended villages, and we heard, too, for the first time the bouncing boom-boom of mortars. Here and there, over British-owned property—being used indiscriminately by Japs—floated dingy, ragged British flags. Ruin had stalked very close to the Gas, Power and Water works which supplied our Settlement. . . . Somewhere in that desolation George had served, and I think, as Winnie watched, she must have been both appalled and proud.

Drawing near the familiar Bund, every building gay with tattered flags, the Pool crammed with warships of friendly nations, we felt we had come home. Buildings were heavily sandbagged along the water front, and there was danger from stray snipers' bullets from across the river; but our friends had turned out to meet us, for business and kindness as usual are Shanghai's mottoes . . . or were, so long as the city survived.

It is perhaps appropriate at this juncture to explain how the great city of Shanghai, with a record of many disturbances behind it, mobilised to meet war. Not only an international body of police and of volunteers were at hand in 1937,

but an army defence force composed of soldiers of various nationalities posted to protect the commercial interests involved. Thus we had a British Defence Force, an American Defence Force, and an Italian Defence Force. The latter were 1,000 Savoy Grenadiers fresh from war in Abyssinia. Frenchtown, which lies alongside the International Settlement and is to all intents and purposes included in it, had a French Defence Force composed largely of Annamites, and Japan had a Japanese Force.

Each of these forces had a Defence Sector. A certain portion of the boundary was allotted to it, ringed in by barbed wire from the war area or possible future zone of combat, and the men to whom that sector was entrusted had complete military control of their zone back from the wired perimeter to the centre of the city.

Now the Japs had always had their sector covering a thickly populated factory zone; a part we always designated as Hongkew or North of the Creek, for the Soochow Creek divided the sector from the main shopping and residential areas. Hongkew extended through yet another zone called Yangtzepoo up to the wharves; this area had been defended by Volunteers and foreign troops. All this land in Hongkew and Yangtzepoo was part of the International Settlement, governed at the time by a Municipal Council of Fourteen, five Englishmen, two Americans, five Chinese, and two Japanese.

At the time war broke out the Council had been engaged trying to work out with the Chinese an amicable arrangement about policing and controlling an Outside Roads area, which had extended out beyond the boundaries of the foreign settlement, and in which a large proportion of the land had been sold to foreigners who had built on it. The roads, too, made by the Council, had been constructed on land duly paid for; the problem was to satisfy both the Chinese who owned the outlying country and a good deal of land in the enclaves between the roads, and the foreigners who did not want to entrust themselves solely to Chinese jurisdiction.

If it had not been for the two Japs on the Council the matter could have been settled, for our Chinese believes in compromise for the sake of peace and always practises it in his daily life. But the Japs, for reasons of their own, threw a monkey wrench into the machinery every time, and pending completion of negotiations our International police patrolled the roads, but dared not venture off into Chinese territory, where they might clash with Chinese police who disputed their authority to function there. You can imagine how aggravating it must have been to be in hot pursuit of a robber and to see him turn gleefully down an alleyway from which he could thumb his nose at justice.

At the outbreak of hostilities in August, 1937, no agreement having been reached, our military experts had decided to take a considerable portion of it inside their defence perimeter. Many municipal buildings were in that sector; a fire station, two big schools for foreign children, a park, and some foreign clubs. Tension was great in Shanghai before the blow actually fell; our police and defence troops were all mobilised and had thrown a rough circle of barbed wire around Frenchtown and the Settlement—and then the balloon went up! In other words, Chinese and Japanese troops began to fight, and as the place where they faced each other was on the boundaries of Hongkew, the battle raged to and fro over that district and at one time right to the banks of the muddy Whangpoo, in Yangtzepoo. Foreign troops and Volunteers assigned to Yangtzepoo were hurriedly withdrawn in the path of the battle . . . and, once the Japs had pushed their enemies back to North Station, were never allowed to return.

Thus did the Japs wrest from the control of the Municipal Council a large portion of the industrial city of Shanghai, immobilising factories, wharves, telephones, postal services. Terrible and pathetic stories were told about the

days following Friday the Thirteenth and Bloody Saturday the Fourteenth. Women and children left their homes to shop south of the creek, heard the crash of bombs and the rattle of machine guns, found their way home blocked by thousands of fleeing refugees, sought other roads and bridges in vain; some kindly policeman advised them to stay south of the creek even if they could get across; they went to a friend's house, climbed high on one of the city's skyscrapers, saw their own area in flames, and never went back. . . . I reckon those Shanghai people who packed up and went home to England in 1937 must have felt an odd sense of familiarity when they saw the devastation caused by Goering's bombs.

Others on Bloody Saturday waited in vain for the return of husbands, wives or children; for that was the day a Chinese plane dropped bombs over a crowded thoroughfare, and literally hundreds of dead bodies, their clothes reft from them by the explosion, had to be shovelled to the side of the road and disposed of unidentified partly because most of them were unrecognisable, partly because the temperature was 100° in the shade . . .

And in this heat the Chinese soldier, clad in his grey cotton uniform and cotton slippers, and with little encouragement or reinforcement, entrenched himself doggedly and held at bay the gathering might of Japan. We who have since tackled the Japanese in Burma, the Solomons and New Guinea, know what this means.

Getting into the middle of it all was much better than reading about it from exile. Once there, we knew what we were up against; and, oddly enough, we resumed an amazingly normal life, hampered, of course, by the difficulty of getting enough sleep o' nights, if we lived anywhere near the fighting zone. My own flat was in the Outside Roads district, and so the noise reached me tempered by several miles of distance; later, when the Chinese retreated, I knew the tide of battle must lap around the edge of our western district, and I kept a suitcase packed ready to evacuate temporarily into a safer zone until things settled down.

At first I had no work to do. Most of the mothers and children had been evacuated to Hongkong; the school in which I taught had become a Royal Ulster Rifles headquarters; the Settlement was cram full of Chinese refugees camped by the roadside, on odd plots of land, in alleyways. I only had to take my camera and sally forth to the top of some high building overlooking the battle line, and a hundred stories crowded in upon me, from which I had to select the most significant, discarding many a poignant scene from too overfull a canvas.

There was the day's bag of Chinese prisoners doing menial chores for their arrogant captors; surprising, this, for we understood there was no quarter given on either side. But the last chore was to dig a trench, and then the prisoners were lined up with their backs to it, and shot so that they fell, conveniently, into the grave they themselves had dug. . . . There was the astounding sight of little ragged Chinese children at play on the banks of the polluted, corpse-infested Soochow Creek. What a testimony to the tenacity of Chinese existence, to the phlegmatic acceptance of calamity, though appalling slaughter must have stalked them daily; still among the ruins the little ones snatched their meed of play!

Not only Chinese lurked still among the forbidden shambles of Hongkew and Yangtzepoo. At least one family of poor Hungarians clung to what they knew as home, aye, even perfected a method whereby they could break through both opposing lines and reach the Settlement in search of provender. This consisted in reaching the Whangpoo bank on the Japanese side, cadging a sampan ride at night from some Chinese fisherman or unofficial ferryman, who landed them over on the opposite bank at Pootung, in Chinese hands. From Pootung

access to the Settlement above a boom laid down by the Chinese was unrestricted.

The Hungarian family of which I write was named Holdosi. The mother, when war broke out, had already drifted away; Valentine, her son, and the father, a ne'er-do-well, left their hideout on periodic jaunts into the Settlement, thinking nothing of the feat. But from one of these jaunts the father, over a considerable period of time, failed to return. So Valentine set out to look for him.

Unfortunately, officialdom in our Settlement had been checking up on these filterings, and Valentine found himself unable to break through its cordon when he was ready to go back. So distressed was he at being detained by our police that he burst forth with the truth. He had left his pets in No Man's Land, in captivity without food or water. Since his father was still missing, these creatures had no one to tend them. What were they? asked a kindly policeman. Valentine enumerated: an Alsatian, two hens, two cats, and a few birds.

The twelve-year-old lad moved heaven and earth to get a permit to return, and the Shanghai Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals did its best for him; but though Settlement officials were willing to turn a blind eye, the Japs could not forgive him for his exploit in evading their sentries not once but many times. So they withheld a permit and closed his former avenue of infiltration. . . . His name got into the papers, and we thought that was the end.

But Valentine of the gypsy parentage did not give up. Somehow he evaded our tightened cordon, slipped once again past the Japs, only to be arrested by a vigilant Sikh policeman guarding Settlement interests in Yangtzepoo. (A few had been allowed to return, but they had only hollow authority.) Realising that he was up against a very determined young person, our Sikh locked Valentine up in the guard room at the police station for two hours, while he endeavoured to persuade the Japs to relax their ban. The boy would be shot on sight if caught. But his ingenuity in getting there once more in spite of all their vigilance infuriated the Japs, and they refused.

On returning to the police station the kindly Sikh discovered that his bird had flown. Valentine had no intention of being defeated within sight of his goal, so he had staged a neat jail break. He collected his pitiful strays under the nose of Nippon, unseen, marshalled them, emaciated and weak, back to Police Headquarters, and was ultimately smuggled into the Settlement with the connivance of our police, in a police van.

He was decorated for his bravery, but his father, a drunken reprobate, proved such a nuisance, trying to capitalise on his son's valour, that Valentine once more took matters into his own hands and ran away. He was adopted by a British family and apprenticed to an engineering firm, and appeared to receive his decoration wearing a neat blue suit, while his two hens and a canary, all that were left of the pets he had risked his life to save, scratched and warbled happily, their lean days over.<sup>1</sup>

We white people learned in those days, if we had not already absorbed the lesson, to admire the Chinese with full hearts for their patience under adversity. Uncomplaining, those with no relatives in the city appropriated some corner and made it their pitiful home. Scouring our ashbins, the children would lug "home" a discarded reed blind, a few bamboo poles. With these, one of the parents would rig up a sketchy shelter. Old kerosene tins, lined with mud, became cooking stoves; for fuel they used sticks and a few portions filched from some garden fence. One and all, the family somehow scraped a living, and the

<sup>1</sup>The other animals had to be destroyed as they were in such wretched condition.

rickety shelter gradually became a hut, with bamboo walls plastered with mud, straw roof thick enough to keep out rain, and a few scraggy hens scratching about the threshold. Refugees with relatives in the city were always taken in, fed and housed by their relations, no matter how distant, for that is one of the ethics of China. Jobs were found for those able to work, and Chinese charities succoured the destitute. Thus did the centuries-old family system of Cathay prove its worth, as so often before.

We foreigners, watching and helping all we could, absorbed some of the oriental fatalism with which the people of the country were so plentifully endowed. Looking up at the sound of steady motors in concert we would see a trio of silver Japanese planes, laden with death, flying overhead. Japanese in the daytime, Chinese at night, as if local rules of the air had been evolved. The land being entirely flat for twenty miles around Shanghai one could get a bird's eye view from any high dwelling of the battle line, or the activities of dive bombers.

I had not been back long when the western country district, whose margin ran 500 yards from my flat, came in for a lot of attention from Japanese airmen. On warm sunny mornings of blue sky and puffy clouds, when in normal times I would have been trotting over those quiet mud paths on my China pony, I went instead to my roof-top and watched three planes at their deadly work; circling round in search of their objective, keeping high for fear of non-existent ack ack, then zoom, an amazing power dive, followed by a great crash, as the plane climbed steeply away from a new and sinister white cloud rising, moving faster and in a different direction from those which were there before. Then, one after another, the remaining planes followed suit.

No gun spoke, no machine gun stuttered in answer; there came not even the lone crack of a sniper's rifle. These bombs were dropped on simple country villages, mud-walled, straw-thatched, guiltless of military occupation, on blue-clad peasantry, poor to the verge of starvation, on that precious beast of toil the water-buffalo. For the moment our Settlement was closed to additional refugees, and these country folk had nowhere to go. We had absorbed the population of Hongkew and of Yangtzepoo, food was running short, refugee camps overcrowded, disease rampant.

Evacuated residents of the western country area being strafed could only pass through the barricades manned by Ulster Riflemen and rescue their household goods by means of a special pass. These people, and members of the various public services, could see Chinese girl guides and boy scouts labouring valiantly to succour the wounded; heard, too, the reverse of the picture; how if a soldier wounded on the battlefield wished to be picked up by ambulance men, he must have two dollars pinned to the inside of his pocket. . . . The age-old system of squeeze, exploited at the moment of man's agony. Something General Chuang tried hard to eradicate, at least in the new generation.

An eye-witness told me, too, of a hospital staffed entirely by Chinese to which a lorry-load of soldiers, all piled atop one another, drove up. In the doorway a Chinese doctor was smoking a cigarette. He watched without moving while the only two soldiers able to walk, one with a smashed foot, and the other with a battered head, crawled out of the van and reached the door of mercy.

Then he took his cigarette out of his mouth and gestured them away. "Full up," he said. The two, without a word, crawled back, and the lorry resumed its search of a place to dump its suffering humanity.

'Yes, that was true; but true, too, was the fact that every soldier received regular pay, a previously unheard-of thing; that they were honest, friendly souls, scrupulously refusing gifts, paying villagers for whatever they had to take. . . . To one who knew China, the improvement was revolutionary.

Peculiar and atrocious torture was the lot of prisoners, mostly Chinese, confined in the Ward Road Gaol at the outbreak of hostilities. The gaol was in the direct line of fire and changed hands twice, so the International authorities begged both sides to observe a little local truce, so that prisoners and warders, most of the latter foreigners, could be removed. To this the belligerents agreed, and in batches of five hundred, two thousand of the gaol's inmates, who numbered seven thousand to begin with, were evacuated in trucks, driven well beyond Settlement boundaries and released in open country with cotton civilian clothes.

But the agile Japanese mind translated this into a scurvy trick. "You foreigners are loosing these men to become soldiers and fight against us," they charged, and resumed firing.

So the remaining five thousand, with fifty foreign warders, short of food, and in deadly peril, had to undergo the torture devised for them. Shells crashed through their walls, into their barred cells, killed them and burned them to a crisp like rats in a trap. At every passage of a whistling shell above the gaol these wretches howled in unison like a pack of mad dogs, so that some of their warders almost went insane to hear them. One Russian prisoner used to bay like a hound, his lower jaw wagging in the extremity of his terror.

Finally the prison lay behind Japanese lines, but I shall never forget the photos I saw, of creatures once human, picked up and dashed against confining walls from which there was no hope of escape. Strangely reminiscent of Pompeii, only Pompeii's desolation was not engineered by man.

There were other photos, too, which would shock anyone who had not resided long in the Far East. Several portions of human remains sprawling about our roads; a head here, a piece of torso there; two legs and nothing else. . . . I suppose the little girl who collected these gruesome snaps was as proud of them as the average boy of his aeroplane series on cigarette cards. After all, at the gates of the Chinese city at Nantao, alongside Shanghai's Frenchtown, there often used to be severed criminals' heads as warning, on top of the posts; you had only to raise your eyes to see them.

Most shops were boarded up against looting; bomb craters were repaired, the shattered fronts of the Palace Hotel, Wing On's and Sincere's replaced. Only certain water and gas mains, hopelessly tangled up in Frenchtown, had to await later attention. Cholera waned as the hot weather passed; people who inquired anxiously whether the bloated bodies floating down the Whangpoo could have infected our water supply, received a negative answer. Nevertheless it was not pleasant to know that we were drinking that very water, as we always had, though, of course, only after it had gone through an intense process of disinfection, which robbed it of much of its minerals.

Occasionally, when a Chinese shell fell short and killed or damaged in the Settlement, a courteous Chinese voice would ring up our City Fathers and apologise. "We are very sorry; it was a mistake."

Over across the river, at Pootung, a few great guns roared, their location still cunningly hidden from the Japs. A certain German agent for Krupps, who had supplied the Chinese army with guns and ammunition, watching results, was not satisfied. With true German thoroughness he obtained a pass to go over beyond the boom and see for himself.

"But you are not using the right ammunition," he gasped as he watched grimy gunners thrust a light calibre shell into the breach. "Oh, no; it's too heavy to handle; this is much easier," rejoined the soldiers cheerfully. And designated a godown full of the mighty unused Krupps ammunition which alone could have ensured deadly accuracy!

By and by, armed with special passes issued by the Japanese, a few people were allowed back into the Yangtzepoo district to rescue some of their belongings.

At least, that was the purpose with which they were issued. Mostly the owners arrived in time to find their property already looted, or to stand, pass in hand, and watch the process going on under their noses. Japanese troops carted anything they fancied away on trucks, and the rest they mostly polluted or destroyed wantonly. Scratch the Jap and you find the cruelty of the Orient, with the vaunted veneer of culture sloughed off. Indeed, it was the Chinese who proved the gentleman in Shanghai's war, even to the last, when common soldiers abandoned hope of safety in the Refugee Zone for the sake of civilians.

If our foreign Concessions had their Bloody Saturday on 14th August, her Chinese country folk for miles beyond and around our western zone experienced their Bloody Sunday on 21st October. Literally from dawn till dusk, in purposeful relays, twenty in the sky at a time, Jap planes bombed that green spread of peaceful land. There were no soldiers, no military objectives. It was fiendish and calculated murder, crowned by machine gunning of a mixed party of foreign riders inside our defence area and the killing of a British soldier at his post.

The constant echoes of that savage day-long bombing shook our houses all through the sunny hours of our Day of Rest. Foreigners more sensitive than Chinese, went about with drawn faces, picturing the havoc being wrought upon luckless victims unable to retaliate. From roofs and house tops we watched, and those who had had the foresight to remove from their country houses beyond the perimeter everything portable, had reason to be thankful.

Soon, all too soon, after the devil's work began, came the inevitable sequel. Ambulances screamed up my road and fire engines scorched along in their wake, a logical procession. Next, from the opposite direction, moving slower because they were afoot and hampered, came the pitiable refugees with their bundles, only to be halted at the railway crossing and refused the sanctuary they craved. The few who had wangled their way unseen over barbed wire, crouched on the pavements, sunk in reflective lethargy. As night fell they scattered; some went back, knowing the Japs did not fly at night; others were mysteriously absorbed into the Settlement's niches and corners. One man sobbed aloud in our gatekeeper's lodge, and I had no need to ask the reason.

At dawn a great horde tried to rush the barricade; the Royal Ulsters had to use bayonets, without drawing blood, as they had been trained to do, with much fierce shouting but with careful restraint, hitting out at nothing more serious than the ragged bundles, or the bamboo carrying-poles of the suppliants who, puzzled but not convinced, took the hard working efforts of these incomprehensible foreigners as temporary fire-crackers, and bided their time. Only gradually, as they saw more fortunate fellows with passes successfully achieve admittance, was it borne in upon them that their long trek had been in vain. Slowly they turned back, the babies swinging in their slung baskets crying disconsolately.

Motor lorries, filthy, mud-bespattered things, slunk in at night, some piled with wounded civilians and others with soldiers. Into the shambles, slippery with blood, our Irish lads had to climb, feeling each pain-racked body over for pistols or ammunition, before allowing the lorry to pass. "They hadn't been bandaged, nuthin'," said one of the men to me, "just thrown in one on top o' the other." And, being Orientals, they suffered in silence.

British outposts blossomed out with new anti-aircraft mountings, and instructions were issued that they should shoot at anyone attacking them. "Just let me have a smack at them," said my corporal friend. "All our best marksmen are in this section now. We'd bring the blighters down, never you fear! . . . It's all right when you're allowed to shoot. I did my bit o' duty down at Windy Corner, where Jap shells came swishing over your head aimed at North Station, and you mustn't fire back nor nuthin'. Jest say your prayers

and hope the Japs don't lose their range. Twelve shell caps I collected one day just round about where I was. I tell you we didn't venture far from our sand-bags. Some of us was sayin' our prayers down there on Windy Corner."

Yes, my Irish laddie. Last trouble, in 1932, our local Volunteers held Windy Corner and were responsible for christening it. There was a pillbox held by "A" Company on which shots rattled like hail, and a mere boy I knew on duty there nearly went deaf as a result.

"The Chinese soldiers are real friendly," he went on. "But I get terrible sorry for those refugees."

Ah, yes, so does anyone who has once seen them. Our congested area, half only of the Settlement proper, had already assimilated Yangtzepoo's dense population, as well as foreign and Chinese refugees from Pootung across the river and from outlying districts, plus as many wounded as could be absorbed. Disease had stalked in on the heels of this invasion; there was no respite, nowhere to go, milling in our gradually narrowing circle we turned and twisted in vain. Since the intensive bombing of western country districts even a breath of country air was denied us. Foot and mouth disease had broken out among the few hoarded cattle within our small perimeter.

There was no rain. For the roofless this was a blessing; they washed their rags in a neighbour's gift of water and dried them from a string between a tree and a telegraph post. Yellow dust, laden with the dried spittle of consumptives, blew into our eyes and throats. Beggars infested the streets, clutching at the foreigner with filthy talons.

Just opposite my flat a Chinese school had been turned into a hospital for wounded soldiers, and sometimes when the "walla walla" was unbearable I would go out on to my balcony to protest. But what I saw always sealed my lips.

A great, dark, open lorry would be drawn up at the kerb. Near at hand, Chinese boy scouts waited with cheap canvas stretchers. The coolies in charge of each lorry had ceased shouting and in the ensuing dead silence everyone waited for a move from the shadowed inside of the lorry.

Slowly and infinitely painfully, a dark form would shamle erect, swaying, and, helped by kind hands, walk down the insecure "gang-plank" to the road. There, if he were able, he would make his way through the hospital gates on foot. In the next spaced silence we had to wait longer. The second soldier made three attempts to get to his feet ere he succeeded. When he ultimately stumbled down the plank and his injuries were revealed in the dim light of the street lamp he was helped on to a stretcher and carried in.

A longer pause followed. When no one else stirred, the boy scouts moved; and the remaining twenty-eight were carried down the plank. Two already had their faces covered over; and a couple of days later several coffins were sent out. . . . When the van had discharged its freight its boards were bare, and darkly stained.

And so, though it was the coolie drivers who shouted, while the dark limp forms were silent as the grave whose fringe was touching them, I could not complain of the noise. Poor rickety old lorries, lurking outside the Settlement, camouflaged, until midnight, lest they be bombed, how they contrasted with lighted motor-ambulances in London last war, speeding smoothly on their way, with nurses in attendance, and every wound temporarily dressed at the field stations.

Meanwhile, the food situation in the beleaguered Settlement was deteriorating. Fortunately our friends the Chinese, wise in misfortune, had immediate resort to other paths than the waterways and rail and roadways blockaded by the enemy. Verily, until the crisis of 1937, I don't think any of us foreigners had given a second thought to the multitudinous intersecting creeks which brought



in their leisurely fashion so much Yangtze Valley produce to Shanghai. We who used to ride far into the country would watch slow barges pulled along by man power or gliding with a favourable wind, their loam-brown ribbed sails skimming the flat fields like disembodied bat's wings against the sky, their sunken water path invisible until we rode up to the bank.

On those barges continued to filter into our city eggs, vegetables, bamboo, rice, chicken, pigs, coal and even live fish in tanks, which some humble fisherman from a concealed inlet had risked his life to catch, and then with great ingenuity had plotted out a creek or canal path for his merchandise.

Our schools had been pooled together and opened in temporary premises, with few pupils and few teachers and most books lost. From time to time I wrote my articles by candlelight, because a bomb had crashed with a mighty shudder near by, and the district had gone black. I was already an old hand at this game; matches and a candle were always at hand, and I had kept a suitcase packed ever since I had got back from Japan.

## CHAPTER V

### INSIDE THE BARRICADES

ALL this while the Japs had been hammering away with a frontal attack leaving Pootung across the river in the enemy's hands, and making no attempt to turn his flank at Tazang. Perhaps, as many said, Japan had not planned to start her campaign at Shanghai, but had seized upon the opportunity presented, and so had had to take time to mobilise and bring up reinforcements. Finally, after seventy-five days, the Chinese weak flank at Tazang was turned, and next day we awoke to sinister silence, and to see the whole Settlement north of Soochow Creek a gigantic barrage of smoke, so continuous and mighty that it was obviously the result of methodic incendiarism.

Then someone spotted the Japanese flag flying over North Station. Swiftly and silently, at dawn or just before, those gallant Chinese remnants had retreated from a position grown untenable, leaving behind them fire and devastation. Round the corner of our Settlement they crept, and dug in on the far side of our barbed wire, waving cheerfully to our Tommies as they did so. In no time they had skillfully camouflaged machine-gun nests ready, using a grave-mound, armfuls of reeds, whatever came to hand. From Pootung, too, they lugged those field pieces which had so cleverly taunted the Japs, and later whispers told that they had buried considerable war material against the day of return.

... Their new defence position brought them just up my road. So swiftly had the situation changed that officialdom had no time to take cognisance of stray journalists like me. So I wandered down the road with my camera.

In the night the Chinese had mined a great bridge over the creek and in the early hours a jarring explosion had wrecked its span. So nobody expected the pursuing Japs to use it, and we were all watching their planes bombing civilians and soldiery alike, when rifle shots cracked out from West Station a stone's throw away, and little dark figures darted here and there for cover, like marionettes. Then a machine gun stuttered in reply, and someone, awakening as I did to what was happening, pulled me back.

Only a few Japs had crossed the bridge, but we did not know how many were behind. Their planes winged towards the scene, diving low and bombing. Suppliant women and children, suddenly caught in hundreds between two fires,

as they clamoured outside our barbed wire barricade, ran helter skelter back to the Chungshan Road Bridge and tried to cram over it all together. They made a marvellous target. The Japs machine gunned them mercilessly, so that their bodies choked the bridge and fell off, some of the mothers with live babies in their dead arms.

Two American boys had been at the bridge with their cameras, one had a movie. Though bullets spat and machine guns stuttered they stuck it out and got their pictures. When our Ulsters let them back through the barricade they came up to me, the only civilian within sight except Chinese. Perspiration rolled down their faces and inside their collars, they were both shaking as if in fever, their voices—they were only lads, after all—weren't steady; numb horror stamped their faces. "Say, tell us where there's a bus that'll take us into town. Frenchtown, anywhere so long as it's out of here," one of them demanded. "We can't stick it any longer." His friend, seeing my look, explained what they had seen. "His hand was shaking so he couldn't change his film, I had to help. But we got our pictures of those goddamned swine, and the States are going to see them if there's hell to pay. Only our shoes are all blood and we want to get out of here . . . we feel sick."

I directed them. And then, with a lightening of spirit, I saw that someone in our International Police had been unable to stand the sight any longer. Against orders, he had given a sign, and the barricades were thrown open, and pitiable refugees at last swarmed in, their babes suspended from bamboo poles, toddlers manfully lugging big bundles, women with tears coursing down their cheeks. Grimy with the dust and sweat of a long trek, in they streamed, until finally a military officer swept up in a fast car and countermanded the order. Slow against the pressure of humans on the far side, to whom it meant life, the barrier closed.

Two of the Jap planes, relentlessly hounding these rejects, swooped low. One dropped his bomb and came out of his dive in a steep climb. Crash! The second plane had collided with him and the ragged crowd waved and cheered in frenzy as one baled out, and grim stalkers in grey cotton detached themselves from their comrades on an errand of extermination.

At certain lone British outposts our lads took matters into their own hands when flesh and blood could stand some fiendish sight no longer; but such incidents were naturally hushed up, though the perpetrators passed the tale along in whispers. There were the Japs chasing from their huts certain Chinese civilians who refused to flee. One elderly man resisted. A great sword flashed; and his daughter had been cut in two before his eyes. He picked up the pitiful trunk and carried it over to the British soldiers, pointing to beyond them where white hospital ambulances waited. They accepted the dying burden and handed it over to the Red Cross, then, as the father doggedly plodded back over No Man's Land to his humble home, the Japs shot him.

Rifles, British this time, crackled against the murderers, who did not live to tell the tale where it would have done most harm. A British officer had to snatch the rifles from his men while the sweat poured down his own face at the restraint forced upon him by circumstance. Another section of our lads, angry at being machine-gunned from the air, let fly. They brought the plane down, and I saw their captain pat the marksman on the back; then they went into a huddle and swore to keep the exploit dark.

A Japanese officer on the north bank of corpse-infested Soochow Creek, parched by the smoke and ruin, came over a bridge to an American Marine outpost on the Settlement side and asked for drinking water. The American had watched the execution of Chinese prisoners induced to lay down their arms by mellifluous promises, and only the day before had been present at the funeral

of a comrade slain by Nippon's soldiery. His face hardened. "We have no water to spare," he said.

Riflemen McGowan will long be remembered in Shanghai. He and other soldier lads were safe behind their sandbags at the perimeter when they saw a riding party machine-gunned from a plane and a girl fall from a shying pony and start to run aimlessly. He called out to her, raced and pulled her in. As he went to help the others a deliberately aimed bullet got him. The Japanese found so much indignation rising against them as a result that they announced their intention of sending a wreath. Brigadier-General Telfer-Smollett, in charge, replied cuttingly that the gesture would be unacceptable. But the list of wreaths from Shanghai strangers made a noble splash in local annals. One spray inscribed "From a mother," officials and civilians of every nationality sent tributes, and one ran with poignant simplicity "From a girl he helped to safety."

In those days I felt as if my features must be set into lines of pity and grief. The dust of countless bombings was in my eyes and throat; they burned, too, with sorrow repressed, and helplessness. There were the two mothers who had left their babies at home and crowded into the Settlement when the barricades were opened to buy rice. Bombs began suddenly to rain down on their village, and they ran back only to find the barrier closed again. To them the safety side was the wrong side and they pleaded agonisedly to be let through.

Finally official policy changed. When it was realised that to deny refugees the security of the Settlement meant murder and sudden death to all, the barricades were again opened, and in swarmed thousands of wretched beings, carrying their babes and what worldly goods they might, footsore, grimy, some of them wounded. The trek went on for days.

Meanwhile the bulk of the Japs were held up by burning Chapei and the lack of water wherewith to put out the fires. Our British waterworks had left the supply on while the territory was under dispute; as soon as the Japs took possession they cut it off. Actually the Chinese had only left a job lot of men to fight a rearguard action over Shanghai's fashionable western country district. They were from different regiments, and wore a scratch lot of garments. But *their faded cleanliness showed that they had managed to wash what they could* in neighbouring creek water.

The Council of the International Settlement informed this ragtag and bobtail of an army that for ten days the hospitality of the Settlement and the French Concession would be open to them if they would lay down their arms and take shelter. Knowing that the cream of Nanking's army had moved off westwards we had reason to expect from the tatterdemalion remnant acceptance of these terms.

But they sent a polite refusal. "We'd rather fight and take our chance of getting away," they said.

How happy-go-lucky they were was demonstrated when they ultimately melted away, on the ninth night, or rather just after midnight. One of them overslept, and waked only at 4.45 a.m. to find his pals gone. Our Tommies saw him come and gaze surprisedly up and down the deserted railway line. The others had called him, but he had turned over for a last snooze . . . and now he felt steal over him the uneasy realisation that at any moment the Japs might creep up and surround him.

His face mirrored his feelings so accurately that our Tommies roared with laughter. He dived back into the dugout, retrieved his rifle and a small bundle, and doubled down the railway track, cheered on by our Tommies. Two hours later an exhausted contingent of Japs, weighed down beneath mighty packs, shambled in to take possession.

The raggle taggle army had done some looting, mostly leather from a nearby factory to soften their beds. But between their departure and the Japanese pursuit civilian looters got busy. Two were caught coming out of the same deserted leather factory by the Japs (who later systematically stripped it bare). One was shot, the other lost his head at the swing of a sword, falling with the leather still convulsively clutched.

During the final stand made by the Chinese at our western boundary, Yu Yuen Road in which I lived became a regular refugee quarter. Bright quilts were spread out on tables rescued by the refugees themselves on wheelbarrows, and there they slept, under the stars, their pots and pans and firewood stacked in a nearby corner. Then, suddenly, disaster caught up with them, refugees and home dwellers alike. A shell came hurtling overhead, burst high up, and sent fragments flying, winged with death. Another and another. The air reverberated with a continuous thunder of bursting projectiles; each rushed through the air with a kind of ponderous inevitability, not at all the scream one had read about. A local colleague of mine likened the sound to that of an express train; not bad, except that you know which direction a train is coming from, while the sound of a shell beats against high buildings and thunders round in echoing cadence, so that all sense of direction is lost.

From beneath this resounding orchestra rose an undertone of shrieks and yells, the patter of feet, the crash of broken crockery. A thrill of panic had seized upon the district; as I stepped out on to my verandah I saw through the dusk fleeing figures, sobbing aloud, calling out, over their heads and shoulders their white cotton padded bed quilts for protection. With agonised urgency dozens of people shouted for "wangpotzau"—"Rickshaw."

The contagion of fear swept over a motor-bus as it met the flying crowds, and the driver tried frantically to turn his huge vehicle in the narrow road instead of driving farther along to where four had been killed and another driver had escaped death as a piece of shrapnel lodged in his cap. While he blocked the way, drivers of hastily-summoned taxis hooted for room to pass. Fire-engine and ambulance sirens soon combined into a crescendo of panic thrilling beyond description.

The first shell had killed one of the soldiers I had been photographing an hour and a half previously, while my Boy was preparing dinner. I was expecting friends and wondered whether I should warn them that things were getting pretty hot my end. But when I phoned they had already left, and they reached me in a lull. While we dined ambulances and furniture-vans raced along outside, wooden shutters were being put up, wheelbarrows and rickshaws evacuated as many Chinese as they would hold; the rest went on foot, carrying the inevitable bundles. By the time we had finished dinner the street was as the street of the dead.

Then shells came thundering overhead once more, and a gigantic Chinese field gun, newly emplaced not half a mile away, blasted out a defiant message. From my roof we could see its flashes; my windows rattled and the whole building shook each time it blazed forth.

My friends, about to depart, said, "You'll never sleep in that din. How about ringing up a boarding-house?" I did, also tried for a taxi, but my district had become a danger zone, and they wouldn't risk coming. The hurtling shrapnel went on, ripping high tension cables, spewing plate glass, far and wide, dealing out death and destruction among our troops, civilians, or in Frenchtown, anywhere except among the retreating Chinese army, at which it was aimed. Japanese shells, falling short, poorly directed. . . .

And so that packed suitcase came in useful after all, and my friends took me and my dog and Boy into their car, and drove us down a street gone dead, into comparative safety.

I had left two Union Jacks proudly flying from my balconies, although awful qualms assailed me lest I had affixed them upside down. Actually this hanging out of flags, which had become part of Shanghai's daily life, was nothing but a futile gesture. Either side used whatever property presented a good vantage-point, both sides looted, both kept the foreigner's flag in the vain hope it would be respected by the other. Become a mockery, thousands of Union Jacks tattered in the four winds during that Shanghai War, and were found still flying when the buildings they were supposed to protect had become empty shells.

I had bought mine at the great Chinese store Wing On. The assistant seemed unusually sullen as he handed me my purchase. His friends had been killed when bombs fell just in front of Wing On and I thought perhaps he was still mourning them. But he explained.

"I am poor, so I have to earn my living," he stated courteously, "and sell you what you ask. But I do not like to sell you those flags. They were made in Japan! . . ."

I went back once or twice, to the roar of great guns that shook the whole street, which was silent and shuttered, with garbage uncollected, and here and there a furtive Chinese peering from a shadowed doorway. A few skinny dogs slunk about in quest of food. Traffic had ceased a mile back; only a few rickshaw pullers, anxious to pick up coppers, prowled up and down, having reaped good harvest in the district of late.

One little procession I saw, which halted me. Had I been a man I should have taken off my hat to it. Dirty, incredibly weary, walking stiff-kneed, a few Chinese Boy Scouts had at the last cleared out of the bomb-devastated countryside. Stubbornly they had stuck to their assigned posts, darting out between bombs and shells to bandage or merely collect the wounded, carrying them on stretchers to the waiting ambulance. Now they had received word that the rearguard was to retreat, and with six rickshaws behind them, carrying their bedding and cook-pots, they were falling back into obscurity, puzzling their old-fashioned parents by their "New Life" outlook and their passionate fervour in self-sacrifice.

When the retreat became reality, the Lone Battalion held out in a warehouse separated from our Settlement Defence lines by a bridge and a creek. Strategically, their stand had little value, but it seized upon local imagination, and all kinds of delicacies were smuggled to them across the bridge. When they finally chose internment in the Settlement in preference to a Japanese prisoners-of-war camp (if such existed for Chinese) they were cheered as they drove through the streets. For this Japan reproved us, and no sooner had Japanese streamers and balloons appeared over Pootung and conquered Chapei, than our City Fathers were requested to curb the anti-Japanese feeling being shown by our populace and our Press.

For with the turning of the Chinese flank at Tazang, Pootung across the river had become untenable, and its army, too, had gone swiftly in the night, though portions had been surprised, induced to pile up their arms by their captors, then sent into a warehouse and burnt alive. . . .

Amidst the devastation that encircled Shanghai one man alone, a Jesuit priest, sought for and found a formula acceptable to both belligerents, whereby an area of a few square miles was created a demilitarised zone to shelter homeless refugees. By a last-minute agreement the northern third of Nantao, an old walled native city adjacent to modern Frenchtown, was set aside and a ring of white flags signalled its position to friend and foe alike. Officially it was dubbed the Nantao Safety Area, but Shanghai, as a personal tribute to its founder, rechristened it the Jacquinot Zone.

Beside Father Jacquinot himself the small band of organisers, six in number,

comprised a Scotsman, a Dane, two Americans and two Frenchmen. Unimaginable problems lay before this small committee. At the outset there was no water and no light. While water could be, and was, brought into the zone by bamboo carrying-pole from adjacent Frenchtown, light was a different problem: and thereby hung a tale.

Several years previously, a Chinese electric light company had sprung up in Nantao and claimed to supply light "just as good as the foreigners!" An imposing headquarters was built and the light supplied compared favourably with that of Frenchtown. The natives congratulated themselves that they could do things just as well as the European when they'd a mind to. Came the war, and the light failed. Victorious Japs entered Nantao to reconnect the light, hunted through the Company's premises, but could find no plant whatever! Nonplussed, they were forced to consult the French Electric Company functioning in the nearby Concession. "Oh, that?" they replied negligently. "We disconnected it as soon as the populace fled."

And at long last the secret came out. The Chinese company had all along been relaying Frenchtown light, exactly as before, to its customers. Now Japan found she couldn't have light or water in her conquered zones until she negotiated with the foreigners who owned them.

There also appeared, at first flush, to be no food whatsoever in the Refugee Zone. Original dwellers of Nantao had, as hostilities came their way, immediately shuttered up their shops and houses; it was impossible to tell whether the inhabitants were cowering within or had fled. But the six thousand who had flocked to the area without food or shelter from Pootung and from the non-safety-zone parts of Nantao were definitely destitute. So an urgent appeal was sent out for something—anything—wherewith to feed them. The International Red Cross responded with van loads of doughy buns as there was a shortage of rice everywhere.

The sanctuary was mapped and divided into nine portions. A volunteer brigade of young Russians, energetic, cheerful, amazing linguists, was appointed, and each patrolled his area accompanied by a Chinese interpreter and armed with sticks to quell rowdiness. To these patrols were reported instances of looting or armed robbery, and as there was no possibility of exit from the zone, no culprits escaped for long.

Several were brought in on the day of my first visit. The Committee had its headquarters in an old ramshackle fire station, where a dingy, odoriferous staircase led up to lighter rooms above. One of these was the Court Room, where summary trial took place of delinquents. Over against a window stood a Chinese in a good cloth overcoat with beaver collar. On either side of him a hanged coolie. He was the master-mind, they the tools, in an armed robbery.

In the centre two young boys of about fifteen pleaded their cause to all and sundry, Chinese fashion, while the judge tarried. Unbelieving and listless, the audience took no part. Stacked beside them was their loot, mutely accusing them. And oh! the pity of such poverty as this! That poor pile of dirty sacking, very effective against the cold, could have been bought with twice my bus fare home. Cold weather had suddenly and bitterly descended upon Shanghai, and the lads had been tempted. . . . Here a thin-lipped Frenchman came in to act as judge, and I was summarily ejected.

But I need not have wasted my pity. The Jacquinet Zone evolved its own peculiar and effective modes of punishment. Mister Beaver-Collar would probably receive the task of clearing out the ordure for a few weeks, while his deluded underlings might get off with chopping firewood or carrying water. There was a decided twinkle in Father Jacquinet's eye when he told me this, and one of the Russian volunteers elaborated cheerfully that they could do with a few more robbers, to clear out more drains.

A dark corner near by revealed seven huddled forms, guarded by a warder. Opium addicts, condemned to squat on the floor for twelve consecutive hours in a given position. "In a day or two they'll be smoking again," shrugged my informant.

The old cobbled roads of Nantao, narrow and dingy, had been cleaned up; most sewer coverings had been pushed aside to allow people to empty household sanitation away, and I had to exercise care not to step into one of these death-traps, to avert my eyes from their contents and to keep a handkerchief for my nostrils.

We came to the ornamental upcurving gables of a great temple to Kwan Ti, god of war. Here people swarmed, pushed, crowded and stared, thrusting out begging hands, plucking at my coat and sleeves. It was almost impossible to take photographs. On the head of a legendary grotesque animal guardian someone's ragged washing had been spread to dry. At the feet of huge wine-red gods with gold-lacquered faces moaned beggars in filthy rags, rolling about as if in pain, with the most excruciating expression of agony distorting their features.

My guide smiled. "Don't let them worry you," said he. "They're only putting on an act." And so they were, for as we passed on they ceased their efforts and stared after us with lurking suspicion.

Up we went to the second floor of the temple. Here row upon row of glossy red gods held sway over hundreds of people who had each staked out the space of a bed at their feet, all over the plank flooring. Flocks of raw cotton escaped from some of the quilts, others, grimy with age, almost fell apart. The air was filled with the pungent smell of wood smoke as countless little charcoal fires burnt gaily in coarse earthenware containers, cooking humble meals of rice. Strange incense for the gods of war!

Here, on a high shelf, a cheap vacuum flask balanced precariously cheek by jowl with a savage god; there, on the knees of a champing demon, sat two roguish little girls. Over in a dark corner an old woman, with sunken eyes and cheeks, shivered and turned her face away, drawing a thin quilt across her shoulders. "She is sick," the others said, "and has not eaten for two days." A coolie, squatting on the floor, fed his babe with intense concentration and solicitude, wielding his chopsticks expertly so that no single grain of rice should soil the child's face.

Rows and rows of blood-red gods; old urns and jars looming out of the shadows: huge contemplative Buddhas over whose arms hung a few pitiful possessions; a faded quilt, a padded coat. What a strange quirk of destiny that oriental priests who had waxed fat for years on this populace should, in defiance of their heritage of ancient philosophy, have deserted them in their hour of need, abandoning this temple of a god of war to a Jesuit Father and his handful of helpers who appropriated it to the service of another, very different God. . . .

Down again, threading a passage past booths, once busy stalls cluttering the temple courtyard, now converted into cubicles housing refugees. Each little family group had a space of six feet by three and a half, yet this grudging space had been hung round with unbelievable "curtains" of rag, so as to ensure privacy. There were even top and bottom "floors," the luckier first-comers sleeping on the wooden stalls, their later brethren on the stone flags below.

But the bitter cold had killed off so many that a day or two later the Jacquinet Committee took it upon themselves to open up some of the definitely abandoned houses and ensconce therein homeless families. It was high time, for women and babies were dying like flies.

As we threaded a way through grimy crowds, sewn into their padded cotton garments for winter, thrusting out hungry hands to detain us, I heard,

as I thought, the familiar clappers of a food-hawker beating a measured cadence. Wearing an armet he clove a passage for himself and his helpers, a couple of men bearing a wide plank suspended from their shoulders by twin rope slings. "What side?" cried he of the clappers, and the crowd pointed and called out instructions.

As the three men vanished down the alleyway designated I asked my escort for an explanation. "Oh! he's looking for dead bodies. They have to be carried to our coffin depot, then we have a public cemetery van which removes the lot."

Scarcely had I digested this when the three men came back, iate and grumbling, their plank swaying empty. An apologetic crowd hastily directed them to another, an old woman "who really was dead." Meanwhile I passed the supposed corpse, who was propping himself up and cursing violently at all and sundry for reporting him dead when he was nothing of the sort! His anger I could understand but that of the body-snatchers had to be explained to me. "They get twenty cents for each one they find," said my guide, "which encourages them not to shirk. It's dangerous to leave bodies lying about: there's still a good deal of cholera."

Outside a once prosperous shop a family conclave had ended and the master of the house was ruthlessly chopping up a piece of his thick mahogany counter for fuel, while the rest looked on. After the counter there would be furniture, shelves, and lastly shutters. By that time perhaps the emergency would be over.

A seller of dwarf trees had hopefully opened up again. We ascended the staircase above his booth and reached the temple library, now a dispensary where French nuns were treating sores and dosing mothers and babes. Several other hospitals were in full swing, staffed largely by missionary-trained Chinese nurses under French Sisters of Charity. In order to clothe those patients suffering from exposure, a census had been taken of all tailors and they had been conscripted to make clothes for the needy.

When I asked one of the Little Sisters of the Poor what happened to orphan children she replied, casually: "Oh, some other woman always takes them and looks after them." Blessed simplicity of Chinese poor!

We crossed over the zigzag bidge leading to the Willow Pattern Teahouse which used to be a famous sightseers' spot in better days, and in the filthy lake surrounding it sacred carp, unfed, were gaping for nourishment, while refugees washed their clothes in the viscous liquid. On the boundary road separating the Safety Area from Japan's occupied territory we were stopped by a middle-aged Chinese in tears.

"My little brother," he said, "the Japanese have taken him. He merely walked over to their side of the road, that's all——"

My guide remarked to me in an aside, "And only this morning the Japs themselves paraded tanks down this street that took up its whole width." And he proceeded to intercede with the wooden-faced Japanese guard manning a sandbag barricade.

"We arrested him because he was on our side of the road," was the reply. "He will be questioned to-morrow. If he was really doing nothing, only 'playing' as his brother says, he will be allowed to return."

In a final appeal, my guide said, in Japanese, "You shouldn't be too hard on a young boy." "Boy!" exclaimed Nippon, stirred out of his stony calm, "he's thirty-four!" Whereupon we decided that the "little brother" should have known better at his age than to stick his head into the Japs' jaws, and withdrew.

Japanese, we saw, had already set their new subjects to work for them. They paid in food only. Even as we watched a cheeky little newsboy darted



from our side of the road and offered the Japanese soldiers a Chinese paper! For a moment I trembled for his safety, for he was only seven, and I knew the Chinese race well enough to realise that the insult was intentional, even at that age. But apparently the Jap was deceived by the imp's cheerful assumption of nonchalance, for he merely shook his head and let him go.

When we returned to Headquarters Court had been dismissed, and a report lay on the table in French, awaiting the return of authority. "Japanese soldiers entered the shops of Wai Tso Ka and Siao Feng Long in the Zone and looted them of valuables and money at 10.23 a.m. to-day."

"Three bodies found in one coffin at the corner of the Courtyard of a Thousand Delights, and one baby's corpse without coffin."

A Volunteer was waiting to report as M. Baboud, one of the Committee, entered. "An old woman is very ill on the third floor of the temple. The others—you understand—they're worried in case it's cholera."

I smiled to myself. The speaker revealed himself a newcomer to the Far East, for Baboud's next question brought out the one significant fact about the dread disease. "How long's she been ill?"

"More than a week already."

"Then it's not cholera," snorted Baboud, "or she'd be dead by now. Send her to hospital."

Jacquinet strode in, seized the phone, and inquired about a shortage in the day's delivery of four hundred thousand buns. On that day the population of the Jacquinet Zone was 150,000. Japanese army and navy authorities, seeing that it had seized upon public imaginations, donated \$20,000 to the Zone with considerable publicity. But later, as war swept westwards they refused to spare any further spot on the broad bosom of Mother China from ravages of fire and sword. Their agreement to the Nantao Zone was, after all, only a gesture designed to win back alienated foreign sympathy.

Besides, Nanking, where they indulged in an orgy of bestiality described in Timperley's book *What War Means*, had no Jacquinet, no quietly-striding figure in long black cassock and black beret, a man with a charmed life, for among bullets and shell splinters in the Great War and in this Sino-Japanese conflict he had moved unscathed, though he had lost a hand as a result of infection. A priest with vision, courage and tenacity of purpose; who took the poorest of Shanghai's outcasts under his care and under the care of One mightier than himself. . . .

Before I left, Jacquinet told me a story. "When the Japanese agreed to spare this Zone, it was on condition I gave my personal guarantee that no single soldier would remain. The area was already surrounded; we found several hundred soldiers sheltering in it. So it was explained to them that their staying meant death to the refugees. At once they picked up their rifles and went off with cheerfully grinning faces to their doom."

Who was it wrote "So many gods, so many creeds?" . . . I had just visited a temple to the Chinese god of war, where a Jesuit priest and missionary-trained nurses worked alongside the Little Sisters of the Poor, and a raggle-taggle band of unbelievers had, with happy-go-lucky unostentation, sacrificed themselves that others might live.

## CHAPTER VI

## BEYOND THE PERIMETER

ALL this while, the camera I had bought gave yeoman service, and the Japs, without knowing it, were expediting despatch of my articles via Siberia. Having a practical monopoly of shipping in and out of Shanghai, they were running their fast shuttle service between Kobe and ourselves; from Kobe any correspondence addressed via Siberia raced overland to Tsuruga and thence connected ultimately in fast time with the Trans-Siberian express. Even from the little village of Hakone I had used this route, and in one instance my article had appeared twelve days after it was written.

Throughout the remainder of my stay I used only two devices, of utmost simplicity, to ensure lack of interference with my mail. It was always addressed in longhand to my editor by name, with no mention of the paper; and I took care not to be known in any official circles as a newspaperwoman. To the average citizen I was a teacher serving the International Government, having a generally slack time because our schools were closed and pupils evacuated. Later, when we ran a scratch school over in Fientown, it functioned for half-days only, and occasionally the headmistress would telephone to warn us not to turn up, as shrapnel was falling round about. . . .

Thus I had ample time to collect my information, and I "had the jump" on other correspondents whose papers had not been able to get them to Shanghai in time. Before the roar of great guns receded, and amid uncanny silence Chapei burned, I had returned to my flat. Here I was close to the perimeter where Japanese now strutted in juxtaposition to our British Tommies, and I was able to study their behaviour as I had previously viewed that of the Chinese. But before I leave those crowded and hazardous days behind, I should like to pay one last tribute to the gallant men of the Royal Ulster Rifles who bore the dust and heat, the rats and pestilence, who lost their lives or risked them on that dangerous boundary line, so that we might be protected.

Clouds of yellow dust, laden with germs from putrid corpses, rose and enveloped them; mosquitoes and flies harried them in their mat-shed shelters; day and night vigilance was needed to prevent a rushing of the barricades. Farmers and peasants from Tazang to Jessfield Village, from Hungjao and Rubicon, had brought in great bales of picked cotton, baskets of live poultry, water buffalo, scraggy goats, cows, pigs and their litters. Footsore these pathetic creatures milled round the barrier, apparently docile, but determined to slip through if the opportunity could possibly be made.

Half an hour on guard at a time was all our Irish laddies could manage; then they looked all in as they were relieved. "Get back, get back there!" they would shout, hitting out at some bundle or carrying-pole. One harmless-looking basket jabbed at as I watched let forth a child's wail. Hastily the woman uncovered it. An awkward soldier bent down and patted the little bullet head. "Sorry, kid; didn't mean to hurt you; sorry, old girl," he said. And the child, who had only been awakened and not injured, gazed up at these outlandish foreign words with grave surprise.

Nobody was more relieved when barriers were opened to these derelicts than the men who had had to deny them entrance. Indeed, in the days that followed, they extended many an unofficial helping hand to victims of Japanese oppression.

Wounded civilians stumbled through that barricade and told their tales of pitiless execution at Tazang of humble country folk, for no reason at all except barbarian savagery. Some family groups left their village twelve or fourteen

strong, of which only two or three survived to reach our Settlement. Dead children had had to be left by the roadside, where pariah dogs devoured the corpses.

Many, reaching the safe side of the barrier, collapsed from utter weariness, making no attempt to find sanctuary. Bundles all around them, babies in baskets, quilts and cooking-pots, testified to their endurance over that long pitiful stretch of country road pitted with shell holes, strewn with shattered huts. In as kindly a way as possible our police, speaking in Chinese, suggested after a while that they should move on. Nevertheless a blind eye was turned when they camped on pavements, against a sheltering wall, or in some dark alleyway.

Mothers suckled their babes then and there on the pavement as they sank on the ground exhausted; men stood listlessly; no single word did they speak unless directly addressed; they were too worn for speech.

These humble refugee folk were not ungrateful for the shelter our foreign Settlement was able to afford them. When four Ulster Riflemen slain by Japanese shrapnel were laid to rest in Bubbling Well Cemetery, there tailed on to the end of their cortège a ragged little crew of penniless outcasts whom kind soldierly hands had helped across the boundary only a few days before.

When war had finally receded from our boundaries our Municipal Council asked for the return of jurisdiction over Hongkew and Yangtzepoo, and non-belligerent nationals demanded permission to return to their property. Grudgingly, certain police were allowed to function, but with nominal rights; and no Chinese policeman was allowed armed.

Drunken Japanese soldiery abounded, brothels and beerhouses had sprung up in abandoned Chinese shops usurped by Nipponese opportunists; faced with the quandary of trying to assert policing rights over a gangsters' area overrun by ronin and insubordinate military, the Council sent their Japanese force there, for in any case their lives were endangered in the free Settlement; Sikhs, and a few foreigners, also subjected to crippling restrictions.

In the first few weeks householders desirous of returning were refused permission on the plea of Japanese military necessity. By the time they obtained and paid heavily for a special pass, valuable machinery of every kind, furniture, electric refrigerators, pianos, etc., had all been removed. So many instances were quoted where the owner actually saw his property taken by Japanese soldiers, with the full connivance of their officers, that one grew tired of hearing them: the evidence was overwhelming. Not only did the Japs systematically loot Chinese factories and mills of spindles and expensive machinery, but they stripped British, German, Swiss and American property with thoroughgoing completeness.

It was maddening. An ironmonger had to stand by, his pass in his hand, and watch his stuff being loaded on to Nipponese military lorries "requisitioned by the army." No receipt was given: the act was blandly denied at army headquarters, and compensation refused. As he bitterly remarked to me afterwards, "At any rate it'll return to China in the end, as shells and bullets."

Many people, finding soiled linen and oddments of furniture thumbed and degraded by unknown hands, left in their looted homes, packed the residue off to auction and swore that never again, so long as they lived in China, would they buy goods of value. An American woman missionary said dispassionately "This is the second time I've had to flee for my life since I came to the Far East. You'd think I'd be used to abandoning all I possess by now. But I'm not. I say to myself: 'I'll just go and get that—oh! no, it's gone.' You've no idea how lacking a little commonplace article in daily use can jar you all out of gear."

Our Council was allowed access to its International Boys' and Girls' schools although the buildings were commandeered by Japanese military and rent paid.

But Council schools for Chinese were not rendered accessible. "We have no intention of doing anything to promote Chinese interests," stated Nippon's representative.

The Council's largest market was also taken over. There, where mainly Japanese shopped, since Chinese had not then been allowed to return, prices were low and supplies plentiful. They were chiefly stolen or commandeered and the salesmen were all Japanese. Red apples from subjugated Korea, sugar from Formosa, cheap toys from the Land of the Rising Sun; all the brittle, colourful gewgaws that, before the present war, penetrated to the four corners of the world. An isolated foreigner who ventured there, in the midst of a purchase, would be elbowed aside roughly. He dared not protest, since the perpetrator who had just swaggered up would turn out to be a soldier, accompanied by several pals, all the worse for liquor, and all eyeing the white man hoping for a quarrel.

The market woman would bow to the ground before these shabby representatives of His Imperial Majesty, and hasten to serve them by whose authority alone she functioned; rudeness unheard of in Japan before the 1937 war. The market was filthy and smelled; Japan's famed cleanliness was not enforced in conquered territory.

At every corner of the roads were motor smashes; nobody had troubled to clear away the débris. According to Japanese military command curfew was enforced in the streets at nine, but traffic was allowed to circulate without lights until eleven thirty. Military vehicles would be driven wildly down bumpy inhabited streets in total darkness; the only one cruising slowly would be that assigned to picking up drunken sons of Nippon and returning them to barracks.

No woman could venture alone into Hongkew or Yangtzepoo. Even foreigners driving cars, issued with special permits, would be held up by a posse of inebriates and ordered to drive to some destination selected by these novel hitch-hikers. After several experiences of this kind, the car owner grew canny, and would pick up his passengers and, driving hell for leather, make for the nearest municipal police station and leave both car and usurpers there to sort themselves out under the ironic scrutiny of our police.

A valueless paper currency was at once foisted upon conquered territory; so blatant was the deception that these notes were even printed without serial numbers, *ad infinitum*. Unlicensed bus companies sprang up by virtue of paying squeeze to local Jap gendarmerie.

Geisha girls, their faces delicately tinted and rice-powdered, minced on red-lacquered geta down the pavement. Bandy-legged soldiers or sailors, incredibly self-important, elbowed the foreigner off into the road and laughed at his discomfiture. At one traffic signal a tall Sikh policeman, having had to watch his red light consistently flouted throughout a long spell of duty, was doggedly carrying on with his job. Watching him, one remembered that he came of a sect which will not tolerate insult. How thoroughly he must have schooled himself in the code of the British Raj to maintain his impassivity under such continuous and unbearable provocation!

But there was yet awaiting him a crucial test. Two seemingly-intoxicated soldiers, after hastily whispering together, cannoned into each other and swerved across the road. Suddenly and dexterously, one shoved the other so that he bowled into the legs of our Sikh and brought that gentleman with ignominy to the dust.

I held my breath. In the old days a Sikh wore his curved knife concealed in the folds of his turban. I saw the dark eyes flash with bitter wrath, the heavy black moustache uncover a glint of white teeth. Slowly the huge policeman picked

himself up, dusted his greatcoat, and settled his turban more firmly. Then his long arm shot out and the two delinquents ducked.

But he was not even deigning to glance at them. His good right arm was merely signalling a passing car on its way. And his impassive self-control expressed such contempt that they passed on, defeated.

Within our free Settlement we christened the occupied portions, Hongkew and Yangtzepoo, "Little Tokyo." Late in December the Japs announced that "as a belated Christmas present" they were throwing the districts open once more. Shanghai's favourite joke for the first half of January was that the only white man to avail himself of the invitation was a Eurasian with Japanese wife and five children. Military laws, drawn up by the Japanese, were enforced—no, I use the wrong word, promulgated, but not enforced.

In Pootung too, a reign of lawlessness was initiated, and carried on by Chinese toughs as soon as their overlords were called by more pressing business elsewhere. Bands of hooligans roamed the countryside holding up for tribute anyone on his way to Shanghai with badly-needed vegetables and meat.

Well I remember the party of young Shanghai boys, Eurasians and Filipinos, who set off for Pootung with fifty dollars to spend on provisions. Prices were so much lower over there that they were delighted with their bargains until they met the first lot of racketeers, who levied a toll of 10 cents on every package. Soon a second gang demanded yet heavier squeeze, and a third relieved the lads of every purchase except one chicken! A crestfallen band returned across the river, thankful for a whole skin, and with one chicken to show for an expenditure of £2 19s. 6d.

As soon as it was realised that cheaper produce could be had in Pootung, a Shanghai firm inaugurated a system of sending launches over, with Chinese crews but a foreign supervisor. Pootung toughs and Japanese ronin, however, waylaid the Chinese and beat them up, so that they refused to sail again. Russians were then substituted and the launch managed one further trip, in spite of an attempt to stop her by Japanese who claimed the monopoly of shipping labour across the Whangpoo. The next day the launch was found scuttled at her moorings alongside the Shanghai Bund.

Another launch was obtained, and the trips were resumed. But this vessel vanished overnight, and in spite of her papers being in order, and an appeal for her return which was lodged with the Japanese Consulate, she just couldn't be located! "Just let's see the launch and we'll discuss the matter," offered obliging Nipponese officials. Meanwhile they managed to lose the ship's papers, so that nothing finally remained to prove the existence of that second launch.

Except, of course, that she was seen plying on the Yangtze River at Nanking, flying the Rising Sun!

The foreign oasis of Shanghai was, of course, a thorn in the flesh of Japanese militarists, not only because from its security we whites could watch their every move, record their cruelties and the methods by which they proceeded to enslave those poorer Chinese upon whom they could lay hands, but also because a great deal of China's revenue was earmarked for the repayment of certain loans from Great Britain, France and other countries; this and the necessary banking arrangements passed through Shanghai. Customs, Posts and Telegraphs all had foreigners in high authoritative positions, so had the Salt Gabelle. The railways were financed largely by foreign concerns; China's great coalmines in the North belonged to the Kailan Mining Administration, a great British affair which owned its own docks and ships. In Shanghai itself the Telephone Company was American-owned, the Electricity by a firm largely American, Gas and Water by British companies, and many wharves were British.

In Frenchtown transport was run by firms financed chiefly from abroad,

and in the Settlement buses and trams were also under foreign control. All the reputable taxi companies were owned and administered by foreigners.

Now I do not want my readers to take these assertions as proof of the white man's exploitation of the Chinese. Our International Settlement was of later date than the Chinese city alongside which it developed. In fact, it was because Chinese would not afford foreign merchants protection and residence in their own walled town that the latter negotiated for a piece of land on which to build and were granted a mud flat—the worst stretch of all. It was only as a result of foreign organisation and capital that the great port developed, on land willingly sold.

Originally Chinese were not allowed to live in it, but in the end its added comforts and security drew them; always it was a refuge for them from their own warlords or bandits. Now that Japan had conquered their territory round about, its richest merchants had made our foreign Settlement and Frenchtown their haven, that is, if they hadn't already been established among us. For long Chinese had kept their accounts in our foreign banks for safety. At the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese "incident" those who had not done so before besieged our banks anxious to transfer.

This created such a serious run on Chinese banks that they appealed to us not to accept any new Chinese deposits. Did I say appealed? That was scarcely the right expression. Just then the Chinese Government owed our banks two months' arrears on a loan. "We will pay the arrears at once if you agree," they said. "If not, we won't, of course, be able to pay you at all; the cash will all be drained from our reserves." So our banks agreed not to allow new Chinese customers from then on. A large amount of Chinese wealth was, of course, in their hands already.

By this time our Hongkong evacuees had returned. One of their first jaunts was around the western perimeter of our Settlement. On the far side of its barbed wire could be seen Japanese soldiers, surveying all other races with conscious superiority. Waving in the breeze flaunted a new flag of Nipponese origin, on a yellow ground the Yang and Yin symbols entwined; yang the positive, male element, yin the female, negative element. This, they learned, was the badge of the Great Way (or Ta Tao) Government, China's new puppet administration. Anyone interfering with it would be shot. Indeed, a notice to this effect actually graced our billboards within the Settlement; and we had grown accustomed to sudden appearances there of armed Japanese soldiery, who arrested Chinese within their homes and spirited them away.

Japanese driving through our Settlement had brought with them the same disregard of traffic signals which obtained in Little Tokyo. They even neglected to take out licences, so that they could not be summoned. Outside our boundaries they acted with systematic brutality: raping, plundering, murdering.

Along the perimeter, until conquered territory was again thrown open to Chinese, we used to see pathetic groups of peasants standing silent, gazing over into the lost land. There was nothing to see: a few enemy soldiers and lorries; factory chimneys cold and stark; fields in which winter wheat was growing untended, vegetable patches once patiently toiled over, neglected now, while people in the Settlement starved, and had actually eaten ALL THE GRASS for want of something green.

Ragged creatures were constantly edging along the wire, on the safe side of the fence, seeking firewood; and whenever our Tommies turned their backs, a post or two supporting the barricades disappeared. The Japs had noticed this avid search, and as the whole deserted countryside was theirs to pillage, they would gather, perhaps from the very homes which were once the heritage of these poor scavengers, a few bits of wood, and drop them casually over the wire, as if from pity.

But the wood was purposely dropped short, and friendly sigus would be made that it should be fetched. Struggling through tangles of barbed wire, tearing their rags and their hands, the poor dupes would reach out for the precious fuel. Then their tempters would grab them and haul them into "Ta Tao" territory, shrieking. Perhaps a shot would be heard later; perhaps the poor things would be kept as slaves, to do the chores. They never returned.

When, later on, country folk were allowed back, they had to submit to extremely rough treatment, as Japanese soldiers inspected their poor bundles and appropriated whatever took their fancy. Anyone attempting to get through without a pass was thrown into the freezing creek, a joke which appealed immensely to these little yellow gentlemen.

I was taking photos at the boundary when an officer stepped up and intimated that he wished to pose. Seeing the extraordinary showdown in such a picture, I placed him alongside a sergeant, also Japanese, but foreign trained, of our Municipal police, and a humble Chinese policeman. The contrast was amazing. Beside our neat, soldierly fellows stood this grinning, bearded Jap with dirty boots, sagging belt, pockets bulging with loot: an officer, mind you!

What, I used to wonder, made Japs so pitiless towards their victims? In the end I decided that the reason, deep down and unacknowledged, was realisation that China is unconquerable.

I do not use the term in a military sense. The Chinese has a resilience of spirit as of body which to us westerners appears incredible. Having narrowly escaped with his life, newly rendered homeless and penniless by war, he will laugh readily at a joke and join in any robust jollity that may be going. He has the gift of believing in chimeras, of hoping against hope; and one yet more potent habit, of measuring life in cycles of centuries instead of by his own little span of years.

In the time of his defeat and humiliation he did not even need to be comforted; the essence of comfort was in himself, inborn, ingrained. Thus he shrugged away temporary misery. Has it not ever been his way to calculate for the future, to buy a wondrous coffin against the day of his death and to provide himself with sons to worship at his grave?

Victory, indeed, demoralised the Japanese while strengthening the morale of his enemy; surely a unique situation in the annals of war.

As soon as the country districts were thrown open again, patient Chinese lined up with bicycles, so that they could go out to the rice boats holed up away from the trouble centres, and buy rice cheap. On their return they found an official of the new "Great Way Government" waiting to impose a levy on each bag of rice ere it was allowed into the Settlement. Over other crossings streamed the poorest of Shanghai's poor, to swarm over the still deserted areas and collect firewood and vegetables, and two more sinister articles which only pariahs could consider marketable: hair and rags from dead bodies, to be sold to hair-net works and paper factories respectively. That is if the collectors managed to get back again past the barrier with their salvage.

For the Japs everywhere levied what they could from whom they could. I used to watch. An old woman (and only the plainest and drabdest of drudges would trust themselves to territory under Jap control) staggered up in a wet drizzle with exhaustion in every line of her face. She had been all day collecting wood and ghoulish rags. With a gesture of savagery—defeated lust, perhaps—one of the Japanese sentries wrenched her pole, a poor person's only riches, off her shoulder, and, seizing her poor bundles one by one, threw them to join others on a pile by the roadside to be burnt. Then he began to beat her about the body with the pole.

She turned to him imploring. Her pole, her precious pole! Crack! it came down across her skull, so that she swayed, a trickle of blood oozing down

to her eye, thickening into a stream. He pushed her roughly so that she staggered several yards, falling at last within our British lines. Here soldier hands picked her up and she was sent to hospital, moaning for her carrying-pole until unconsciousness intervened. Witnesses, with myself, of the whole occurrence, our Tommies had learnt to keep silence.

Just about that time the Vice-Consul of a Scandinavian country was motoring out in Japanese-controlled territory at Hungjao one Sunday, with the usual special consular pass pasted on his windscreen. He had left his car in the road while he inspected deserted property belonging to one of his nationals. He returned just in time to find his chauffeur protesting while two Jap soldiers were ordering him to start up the engine. They were comfortably ensconced in the car, and as cargo had with them a bound pig (stolen) and a bound Chinese (the unfortunate owner of the pig).

The Vice-Consular chauffeur was pointing to his master's pass but Nippon either would not or could not understand. The twain were just preparing to enforce their demands to be driven four miles to the barrier at pistol point when the car's owner erupted upon them.

The prospect of having to walk four miles while two Little Yellow Gentlemen, a Chinese and a pig rode in his new car stirred his blood. Forgetting the laws of diplomacy it was incumbent upon him to observe, and ignoring the pistols, he yanked the Chinese out, swore roundly at the soldiers in his own language, being unable to speak theirs, and pointed to the road. Whereupon they meekly stowed away their weapons, got out, removed the pig, and bowed, with nervous smiles. Our hero sped down the road, leaving the air still sulphurous with his language. Shanghai was delighted.

When, under considerable diplomatic pressure, Japan at last issued permits to certain neutrals to return to conquered areas and remove therefrom machinery or other paraphernalia, the permits proved valueless: either the stuff was already stolen, or under some excuse of military necessity access was denied. In this connexion an interesting sidelight was cast upon various conflicting "authorities" functioning under Japanese control by the story told me when the Polish foreman of a British mill returned empty-handed from an expedition designed to rescue spindles.

"I went over with a special gang of labourers and thirty trucks. But in spite of my pass they stopped my caravan on plea of military necessity. While the palaver was going on I sauntered through the barrier on foot, using my own personal pass, and casually made my way towards our mills.

"There weren't any soldiers, but on the edge of the block, near the boundary stone which states the property to be British, a small aluminium sign had been hammered into the ground. 'The metal contents of this building have been earmarked for the use of the Japanese Government.'

"Just as I got inside a tough-looking ronin and his pals walked in. 'What are you doing here?' they asked.

"Oh . . . er . . . just looking round at this machinery,' I said.

"You are interested?"

"You mean?" said I.

"Do you want to buy?"

"I had the title deeds to that British property in my pocket, so I felt a bit queer, as you can imagine. After a bit I said, 'Are you the owner?'"

"Sure. I will sell any or all of these machines to you for \$25 apiece."

"They were worth \$600 at least, each. Only it was obvious the ronin, though another batch of gangsters had earmarked the stuff for Japan's munitions, was prepared to sell it to me. However, I wasn't empowered to enter into irregular deals of this kind. . . . A week later, when I went back, every scrap of machinery had vanished."



Round about this time I met an easy-going, unassuming New Zealander named Rewi Alley. Named by his father after a Maori chieftain Rewi had drifted to Shanghai on the aftermath of the Great War, in which he had taken part, and had become factory inspector under the Municipal Council. The conditions under which Chinese, and especially small boys, worked appalled him. He laboured to bring in, and then enforce, laws for betterment, and incidentally he himself invented a few safety devices to prevent the cutting off of small boys' fingers by machinery.

At the end of his first five years' service Rewi Alley obtained—as we all did—eight months' leave. But he didn't go home. He went into the Interior to help with Famine Relief work. Later, he was lent by the Council to help administer Flood Relief. He had already picked up a thorough knowledge of Shanghai Chinese: now in the north, toiling to help people starving and down with cholera, typhus and dysentery, he learned other dialects.

More, he adopted two small Chinese urchins abandoned by their destitute parents, and brought them back with him to our great city. Here some white men began to look upon him askance. What on earth possessed Rewi Alley, bachelor, to adopt a family, and a Chinese one at that?

Rewi, however, went serenely on his way, savouring the best of life. He put his two boys to school and finally entered one for the local American University. He collected a few beautiful and unique curios; he plodded away at his job of improving the conditions of the humble Chinese factory worker.

And then came the Sino-Japanese war. Every alleyway, every ramshackle building, every bit of machinery, old and new, in the district later dubbed "Little Tokyo" was known to Shanghai's most distinguished factory inspector.

He was one of the first to get a permit to visit the ravaged area after the Chinese army withdrew. From factory to factory he went, observing the ruin of work nearest his heart. Silent, he stood and watched the pillaging of factories and mills. A few weeks later he saw Chinese labour being conscripted by force from among refugees, heided off to work under wretched conditions, in those mills which had not suffered damage, for the benefit of Japan.

Alley came back hopping mad. His report was a stinging indictment of Japanese dishonesty. Back at his desk, he brooded.

It was then I called to see him about factory encroachment in our residential western district. Those few Chinese factory owners who had removed their machinery in time into the unscathed portion of Shanghai had set it up here and there and got it going again, to the great discomfort of residents, who had to suffer smoke and smells, clanking machinery and work-bells, at all hours of the day and night.

Alley was sitting negligently in his chair; his tawny hair very much tousled. His clothing, loose and comfortable, hid the extreme sturdiness of his body, and his blue eyes, as he listened, seemed almost lazy. When I had finished he made it clear there wasn't much to be done. But somehow, by interjecting a few apparently irrelevant remarks, he introduced an unexpected twist. "Where else can the poor devils set up their factories? It's really amazing what they have managed to do with the little they've got."

He was right. It always is a marvel to foreigners how the Chinese can create with next to nothing, live on next to nothing. . . . This was war; who was I to complain about smoke and noise—I, an outsider, living proudly isolated in my little island of comforts: screened flat, refrigerator, and so on; keeping myself apart from thousands of people whose family rice bowl had been broken? . . . In some odd way, without lecturing at all, without putting it into concrete words, Alley had conveyed to me a great lesson.

With a shrug of his massive shoulders he conveyed a typical Chinese message in connexion with my complaint: "Me yu fa tz" ("Nothing to be done").

Somehow, the conversation drifted. Alley had lost all his treasures, for he had lived in Kiangwan, overrun by Japs. But though his blue eyes looked a little weary, one sensed that he weighed his own loss lightly compared with that of millions. "Mo yu fa tz."

So I left, little knowing that, there in the office which somehow seemed rather small and cramping for his open-air personality, Rewi Alley was brooding up his great idea, inspired by Edgar Snow. Typically its object was to help the Chinese, and it was based on his knowledge of them, his trust in the honesty and integrity of the simple workman.

This is what Alley said, when he pushed his way finally into the presence of a man great enough to value and to further his scheme, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr. "The Japs will go on beating China back. They will take Nanking and Hankow and Canton. And, if nobody does anything about it, they will soon have the whole industrial machinery of the country in their hands. Its use will be turned to their needs. We will have Chinese soldiers killed by Chinese bullets made in Chinese factories. Chinese slaves will make uniform material for Japs. Or weave cloth and silk to be exported to America in exchange for armaments.

"They've already grabbed Shanghai's machinery. Too late to act here. But we can still prevent the rest from falling into alien hands, if we work quickly enough. Give me the means and the authority, and I'll go to General Chiang Kai Shek and gather a little band of Chinese engineers about me and we'll enlist coolie labour and move that factory material piece by piece into the guerrilla country of the future. We'll scatter it; otherwise it'll be too easily bombed.

"Each village can make one article, or one portion of machinery. These can be transported by mule, creek and wheelbarrow to assembly centres when necessary. The Japs are only occupying, can only occupy, the main arteries. We will function over the broad enclaves of land that stretch between."

Sir Archibald gave Alley his backing, though in secret, of course. Alley selected a few eager young Chinese, mostly educated abroad at American Universities, electrical or engineering experts, holding down good jobs in Shanghai or elsewhere, and he fired them with his idea. They threw up their well-paid jobs, he obtained release from his, and the great project began to take shape.

Chinese Industrial Co-Operatives, they called themselves; Indusco, for short. Until Japan decided to take on the States and Great Britain as well as China money was being subscribed and sent into the Interior from America, Britain and even from Shanghai and Hongkong, to help finance the scheme.

Military uniforms, hand grenades, blankets, socks, candles, soap, these and many other articles were produced in guerrilla country largely by refugees who, unless occupied, would in the end have drifted back to swell the ranks of Japanese slaves. At the outset each unit was financed by loans at reasonable rates of interest which, as soon as they were repaid, were loaned out again to yet another budding industry, and so on. Alley himself travelled more than 18,000 miles by ox-cart, canal-craft, bicycle, horse and mule back and on foot in the first two years. Bombed, capsized, wrecked, smitten with malaria and dysentery, eating Chinese food, talking Chinese for weeks on end with never a glimpse of a white man, he carried on and still carries on.

He himself says "Soon will come an era of reconstruction. Men's thoughts will turn to find better ways of doing things and better ways to live and work together. . . . Workers are the salt of the earth and to have one's being tied up in their destiny and in making livelihood possible where there was no livelihood before—this is true adventure."

We used to make secret collections for China's Indusco. Some anonymous collector would pass it on to an anonymous skipper of a coastal steamer sailing

under the Red Ensign. In Hongkong the money bought machines, wool, cotton, scrap iron, whatever was needed: and this in turn was either flown over into Free China or smuggled through Japanese lines into guerrilla country to some depot over which flew the Red Triangle flag of Indusco.

Gradually the purpose of the Co-Operatives was being fulfilled, in spite of disillusionments and opposition from some Chinese circles which did not like to see the common people managing their own concerns. Now the tide of war has lapped over both Shanghai and Hongkong, I wonder how the Red Triangle fares, and whether enough coal, minerals and water power have been discovered and harnessed in the Interior to keep its flag flying until once more an overland route is opened into Free China?

And Rewi Alley? Do you think he chafes at being cut off from last contact with the white man's world? Not he! Long ago he left behind him, with one of his inimitable, lazy shuugs, the fleshpots of what we people call civilisation. While we were balancing precariously on the diplomatic tight rope, watching Japan loot, and hoping to keep our own skirts out of the mess, with his two adopted sons, fine lads now, HE went off into the blue.

When war's over he'll enthuse about the marvellous ingenuity and recuperative power of the Chinese. He'll say how grateful he is to all those who helped; the only person he won't mention will be himself.

Only, this is a forgetful world. Who, I wonder, will remember Rewi Alley?

## CHAPTER VII

### DISINTEGRATION

WHILE that pall of smoke still rose from mile after mile of Shanghai north-of-the-creek, we foreigners took up the thread of our daily lives in the seven square miles remaining to us; Shanghai south-of-the-creek, and French-town. As soon as the western hinterland of Hungjao was thrown open we resumed our old occupation of paper-hunting; but it was paper-hunting with a difference, and only the true enthusiasts turned out.

For the fields over which we galloped had only a few weeks before been a battlefield; our familiar "runs" and "lines" had been criss-crossed by trenches and pitted with shell holes; impossible to tell whether the bundle of rags yonder sheltered a rotting corpse, while the small round object almost buried from view might be either a skull or an unexploded hand-grenade.

Under such circumstances we went rather gingerly; our speed across country lacked verve! I remember my chief consolation was the entirely selfish thought that the mounted "hares" who had laid our paper trail had covered the ground before us, and had thus taken upon themselves the greater risk in the interest of sport.

We rode blithely past the barricades on our Mongolian ponies, rarin' to go, after being cooped up for many moons inside the monotonous perimeter. Jap soldiers on guard scowled at us ferociously; for whereas every Celestial passing had to take off his hat and bow low to the conquerors, and on his return from the delectable land thrown open for him to loot, display his plunder and pay squeeze, we foreigners, unbowed, came laughing by on our mounts; and if we displayed any feelings at all, they were certainly not servile; distaste and scorn predominated as we watched little scenes of bullying played out on the side lines.

No matter; we left them behind. A few spectators on foot had also seized an opportunity for temporary escape, and ploughed through the mud to the nearest big jump, waiting there for spills, perched on what a newcomer was heard to call an ant heap, though it was really a grave mound.

As we pounded across the deserted countryside I found myself longing for the usual cantankerous peasants stringing wire across the track, or digging pits for unwary ponies to break their legs in, or dashing out to be about us with bamboo poles as we galloped across their crops. The Paper Hunt Club paid ample compensation for damage always, but many Chinese village headmen would pocket the money as squeeze and allow the villagers to cherish a grievance.

No villager came out of humble little mud huts, no "wonk" barked at our ponies' feet, no spiteful hand had slyly removed a paper trail so that it led into a muddy swamp instead of where our hares had laid it. No blue-clad figure bent low over the loam and toiled with the immemorial patience of the Orient to fill the family rice bowl. In the words of their everyday speech "the rice bowl of all these people had been broken."

I had expected, nay hoped, to find many of them back, doggedly reconstructing, smoothing order out of chaos. But Japan's lesson of terrorism had bitten too deep. Only the riff-raff had swept in by day to loot. Riding over those fields of untended winter wheat I was able to interpret the signs anew and understand why the real inhabitants held back.

The innumerable trenches were absolutely untouched. Their outline was as sharp as on the day they were dug by Nanking's retreating remnants, only water had seeped into most of them. There on the face of the land Japan had written a tale plain for all to read. Villages had one and all been bombed without mercy; battered and shelled and burnt until nothing but heaps of rubble remained. Soldiers sat snug and unscathed within their trenches, waiting to join battle with a foe which preferred to war on women and children.

Only one house in the village still boasted of as many as three walls, and in the very middle of the pile of bricks and broken tiles sat a lone Chinese, perfectly still, waiting. I had seen no other living Oriental within half a mile. Was he a forerunner of others who would ultimately return, and had he decided to sit there until some neighbour showed up? Two or three, working in concert, could perhaps make some effort at reconstruction.

If peasants did not soon return to their fields there would be no wheat, no beans, no cotton, no rice. More, the very country folk who should be cultivating these crops would remain a charge upon our city.

Further west, corpses still lay unburied. Nippon, in her haste to get on towards Nanking, left them lying. Besides, with the country folk gone, no slaves had been left to do their masters' bidding. Shanghai had good reason to fear a disease-filled summer. Take, for example, the following conversation, quite an everyday one, between Mr. G. and myself.

G.: "Think I'll send the wife and children home, though I can't afford it. They'll catch all sorts of things this summer if I don't."

Myself: "Surely by then the bodies'll have disintegrated."

G.: "I'm afraid the cold will have preserved them up till now."

Myself (comfortingly): "Well, won't the wonks have eaten them all soon?"

G.: "They say most of the wonks have been killed off too, by starving people left hiding here and there."

As I had noticed hardly any wonks on my ride I felt G. was right, and had no more comfort to offer.

But to go back to our first paper hunt in 1938. Half way through I suddenly remembered that Japan had declared a curfew at 5 p.m., and that anyone failing to get back through the barriers in time would be shut into that desolate countryside at the mercy of drunken soldiery. As I was mounted on a

strange pony which shied at every irregularity in the terrain, and almost unseated me once, I considered discretion the better part of valour and turned back.

Bits of broken telegraph and telephone wire hung from trees and splintered posts and threatened my eyes; every time my pony's foot touched a piece of tin or iron he shied violently and I wondered if the object was a grenade. It had not helped as I set out to be warned that local "potato mashers" had been made with green bamboo handles which had now shrunk so that less than a touch would explode them.

People returning to investigate their houses—no one had gone back to live—had all been warned not to light fires until stoves, chimneys, and every likely and unlikely place had been searched for ammunition. One or two of the bigger homes had already sent out a Russian watchman or a Sikh to camp there and prevent further looting.

As I was jogging back along Macleod Road, a Japanese military car drew up and stopped, and the officer, getting out, accosted me. I had half a mind to bolt, but fortunately my interlocutor only wanted to be directed. . . . And while the little conversation went on, I was conscious of yet another car pausing near by, while two foreigners in it ostentatiously studied the scenery. Only when they felt sure that I was not getting involved in some awkward predicament did they drive away. Later on I managed to thank them; I have mentioned the little act of chivalry by the way, as it was typical of the manner in which Shanghailanders of all nationalities stood together against the common foe . . . though officially, then, he was fighting only against Cathay.

Back into the Settlement through the barrier, I had to fight my way through hordes of ragged scavengers, who had spent the day looting everything they could lay hands on and were now displaying their plunder and already bargaining with each other for its disposal. The road was littered with débris, municipal police were vainly trying to clear it, but daily the same thing occurred.

From the point of view of the hapless owners of property in the Hungjao district such thievery was exasperating; but a broader view envisaged those humble bits of fencing sold for firewood, those coloured tiles and that stolen mirror, as the nucleus of an infinitesimal capital from which some poor disinherited one would in time build up a trade.

It was only a few nights after this first paper hunt that I heard under my windows the heartrending cry which, in China, comes as an aftermath of all great disasters. "Shang hei tz! Yao ma shang hei tz!"—"Children! Children for sale!"

I snatched some money and hurried downstairs. The man it was who cried out, squatting on his haunches, with his back to the wall, beneath my verandah. The wife sat silent, and nursed her youngest at the breast. On either side of her were her two other children; and each of the babes she had borne was a male; considered the greatest of good fortune.

I looked closer. Pitiful subterfuge! Unable to stay her husband's decision, the woman had blackened and smeared the face of her bonny year-old son, her Benjamin, in an attempt to render him unsightly in the eyes of would-be purchasers. Yet through the grime he still smiled roguishly at me, showing beautiful little even teeth.

The middle child, aged nearly three, lolled wearily against the mother, too young to understand. But the third—ah! the third! Only five, but with the wisdom born of the streets he shrank back fearfully against the wall. HE KNEW. He was the eldest; the one most liable to be taken; able to look after himself, to be useful about a house or field, to work hard for a new master. . . .

I thrust a dollar into the man's hands and he snatched it and concealed it in one movement with the fearful haste of the destitute, and for a while his high wail changed to a whine of blessings on my head. But a dollar would

not sustain life in the little family for more than a couple of days, and they had nowhere to lay their heads, no hope when that was spent. So, a little later, the cry broke out again: illustration of what must have been happening over wide areas. "Children! Children for sale!"

It was at this stage, early in 1938 as war receded gradually into the hinterland, that we in Shanghai grew conscious of guerrilla activities, not only in the country round about, but in our midst. First we noticed clusters of dirty-white five-hundred-ton motor-boats, of Japanese origin, such as are used round about Nippon's coast for shark fishing. These contrasted oddly with dark high-pooped junks chained together as prisoners, as indeed they were until a certain tax had been paid and they had agreed to sail under Nippon's new puppet flag.

Being small and fairly swift, with a shallow draft, these shark boats had been brought over to hunt guerrillas. We would see, too, from Pootung across the river, huge columns of black smoke rising, as if some oil dump had been fired; and wounded soldiers would be rushed into Hongkew by truck, though the battle line was hundreds of miles away. One delightful tit-bit salvaged from those times was the petition of Chinese puppet police detailed to patrol Pootung, that they be allowed to reside on our side of the river "because Pootung was so unsafe." Poor devils, they were not allowed arms lest they desert therewith to the guerrillas, and as soon as it was known, the latter terrorised them, and they would be found decapitated.

There was another Shanghai tale, too, anent Amoy, the island off China's coast roughly midway between Hongkong and Shanghai. This the Japanese had taken over, but so far their attempts to land on the mainland opposite had been foiled. As their failure had been observed from the little island of Kulangsu not half a mile away, by the foreigners and Chinese who inhabited it in security, for Kulangsu had international status like Shanghai—the Little Yellow Gentlemen were much annoyed.

It was with glee, therefore, that they finally contacted a local bad character and bandit chieftain, who, in exchange for a goodly sum paid in advance, agreed to ensure their safe landing. Everything went as planned; a fair-sized Jap force not only landed unopposed but marched inland for several miles, accompanied by a couple of machine guns and a tank. Upon reaching the town which was to be a key to their future large-scale offensive, they found it, as promised, deserted, and lying in its streets, spreadeagled, several corpses wearing the uniforms of Chinese loyalists.

Tired after their long march, the usurpers settled down to a good night's rest, little guessing that those realistic corpses were local prisoners earmarked for death, who had been dressed up before being shot. The Bad Lot was no traitor; by midnight he had contacted his own people, and led them to attack. Tank and machine guns were abandoned, and those Japs who survived the slaughter found, on reaching the shore, that most of their motor-boats had been either sunk or removed by the enemy. Only a pitiful remnant survived to tell the tale.

Three miles beyond Shanghai's western boundary a Russian Telephone Company employee was superintending repairs when he heard the tat-tat of a machine gun. Some yards over on his right a little party of Japanese soldiers threw themselves flat and lay motionless in the grass. Then a few Chinese dressed like peasants stepped out from behind some grave mounds, picked up the rifles and ammunition of the prostrate men, and faded silently into the background.

On the perimeter, our British troops played a trick on the Japs which kept us laughing for days. Three Jap soldiers having just crossed the perimeter boundary to fetch hot rice and food for themselves were strutting back across

the railway lines when a volley of shooting burst forth from behind trees edging the park. The three fell flat on their stomachs with a yell, let go the food which scattered all over the track, and wormed themselves over to the long grass on the far side. While they were still lying doggo their own train came chugging along and neatly ran over what was left of their food.

You can imagine the sheepish expressions on their faces as realisation slowly dawned that the shooting was only British soldiers at target practice just beyond the bushes, and that our small band of sentries was not attempting to conceal its mirth.

Within the section of Shanghai still under Japan's mailed fist various pro-Japanese societies sprang up; their object was to wipe out anti-Japanese elements working within the safety of our Settlement or of Frenchtown. For instance, there was a fearless Mr. Tsai, editor of an anti-Japanese newspaper called the *Social Evening News*. A certain Nipponese named Konomi had gathered around him a band of Chinese renegades calling themselves the Hwang Tao or Yellow Way Society. One of them lured Tsai from the comparative safety of Frenchtown into Hongkew where he disappeared after visiting the New Asia Hotel.

An hour and a half later a penniless coolie named Hsu, who in desperation had applied at the New Asia Hotel for work, was awakened from a doze and given a head in a pail. "Wash this head," he was told. Still half asleep he asked, "What kind of a head?" "An anti-Japanese head," was the grim reply, and Tsai's head was handed over to him.

Under protest he performed the gruesome task, and the next evening, washed and neatly ticketed, Tsai's head was found in his Frenchtown haunts. Our Municipal police actually ran this plot to earth, got Hsu to give evidence at the Special District Court, and there charged certain members of the Yellow Way Society with murder. The Japanese instigators could not be touched, however, under the protection of extra-territoriality, which meant that any Japanese subject must be handed over to his own courts for trial. With Japanese feeling running so high they would have been let off with some risible fine, or dismissed with a caution. . . .

Japanese disregard for justice was shown in many other ways, gradually seeping into our Settlement and undermining its comparative safety. . . . Driving their cars and trucks, whenever they reached a signal light they would go charging on, red light or no, sometimes throwing a maddening grin over their shoulders at the indignant policeman. His duty was to take their number and report them; but many ignored another law and had no licence, so there was no number to take. If by chance there was one, and the delinquent was in consequence summoned before the court, he wouldn't turn up, secure in his domicile in Hongkew where no Settlement police might with impunity seek him out.

British bus and tram companies were not allowed to resume their old routes in the area usurped by Japan, rickshaw coolies were even given licences to ply there in direct defiance to Municipal law. Mushroom taxi companies sprang up, battered vehicles driven wildly by unqualified drivers; and once more our Settlement finances suffered, since these Japanese companies paid no revenue. For a time our Settlement hire car companies continued to function on the occupied side of the creek, since the Japs didn't dare give a direct order to their troops to refuse them passage. But a method more bloodthirsty and just as effective was resorted to.

To begin with, companies wishing to operate north of the creek were forced to pay big sums to some Jap company for special passes. We foreigners, sticking to our old favourites the cars of Ford or Taylor Garages, would ring up and ask for a "Pass car." Naturally, we had to pay a higher charge, but

didn't mind, because they spelled comfort and safety. Well, when it was seen that Ford and Taylor couldn't be edged out by squeeze, the chauffeurs were found on several successive days in Hongkew with their throats cut, and abandoned taxis near by. This final ronin warning not to cross the boundary had to be swallowed and accepted. Thenceforward when we had to go across Soochow Creek, we hired a Japanese-sponsored car, or walked.

It was an ironical reflection on the times that, just as the taxi dispute was working out according to Japanese designs, a Japanese shopkeeper named Mukai, who had recently reopened his little store in the Settlement, rang up for a "Ford" and ordered the man to drive to the Foomin Hospital over in Hongkew. The driver refused. At the resulting altercation the Chinese policeman assigned to guard that particular store joined in only to discover that, in some private feud, Mukai had been stabbed near the heart in his shop. Quietly he had changed his kimono and ordered a taxi . . . only to find that the machinations of his own countrymen prevented him from driving in comfort to hospital. He was sent off in a police ambulance.

That was one of the odd features of Shanghai's anomalous position as an International city, the fact that every Japanese obtained as courteous a service and as complete a protection as our police were able to afford. Thus even when every available man was required for special duty, you would see, outside each little Japanese bazaar, or barber's shop, a uniformed constable, protecting him and his family from reprisals.

We foreigners, of course, waged our own quiet boycott against Japanese goods. So though one by one they reopened in the Settlement, it was only to find that they had lost their customers. Defeated by their country's victory the storekeeper no sooner gave up than a Chinese successor stepped in. A single small barber's shop of this kind made a pathetic stand. At the outbreak of war the whole family barricaded itself in and a foreign inspector of our police called there, giving the master of the house a chit.

"If you or your servant presents this at any time at Chengtu Road Police Station, we will send a police van and escort to get you all safely out of the Settlement into Hongkew."

But the barber held out, sending his faithful Chinese servant out to buy food. At last, one day, at the end of the second month, he broke. The chit appeared at Chengtu Road and his little family was safely removed, only Aihara stayed on. Then in December warfare receded, but its legacy of hate made it dangerous for any Japanese to walk abroad; so Aihara did not actually reopen until February.

The slow weeks passed without customers. Even his own foreign customers could not forgive the little barber for what his countrymen had done to China. So in the end he closed up, recognising defeat.

Meanwhile Chinese had begun their reconstruction with dogged determination with whatever came to hand. Rusted machinery dismantled under shell fire and saved from the invaders, spindles and dyeing vats and tall iron chimneys, came out of the godowns where they had temporarily been stored and were installed wherever their owners could lease or buy a vacant plot of land. Before the war 3,801 industrial enterprises functioned within the total confines of the Shanghai International Settlement. Of those 905 had been totally destroyed and about 1,000 looted or damaged. Yet, by May, 1938, industrialists had contrived to reopen 761 within our restricted space south of the creek.

Perhaps, while I am discussing figures it might be as well to give the uniformed reader some idea of the huge foreign investments in Shanghai, a port developed by white men, an oasis in a desert of rival war lords, a sanctuary for white and yellow races in time of trouble.



At the time of which I am writing European and American investments in Shanghai alone totalled more than £300,000,000 (sterling) that is two-thirds of total western investments in China as a whole. The port was the centre of Anglo-Saxon banking interests in East Asia, and 35 per cent of her exports were shipped to countries of the British Empire. In addition, huge British shipping interests in the Far East were concentrated in Shanghai.

In spite of departures by every boat the ability of the place to hold out was remarkable. Wealthy Chinese who had fled there for safety thronged cinemas and restaurants and ballrooms; 80 per cent of the number of pre-war workers was already employed in industrial concerns, though, of course, under worse conditions; shipping had doubled, trade, during the year 1938, tripled.

And this in spite of Japanese efforts to strangle and tax trade in every imaginable shape or form. Every fish in our markets came from a crew flying the puppet flag of conquered China; every vegetable, every egg and every piece of meat, had yielded up its tribute ere it was allowed to reach us. There was beginning a monopoly of all Chinese trade passing through the regular channels (except, of course, that carried in British and other neutral bottoms) of railways and waterways. Fortunately, at the first sign of interference with our ships, the gallant Navy took action.

A British merchant vessel, the *Tungwo*, plying on the Yangtze, was detained by the Japs. No sooner had we requested her return and met with the usual prevarication than our little "Cuckoo" cleared decks for action and was ordered to proceed to the rescue. This order being communicated to Nippon's headquarters the *Tungwo* was released with indecent haste. Our base at Singapore had just been declared open, and this fact may have influenced the decision.

The Kailan Mining Administration, which I mentioned in an earlier chapter as one of our greatest British investments in China, was soon placed in a quandary by Japan's ingenuity. Owning its own docks and ships, the K.M.A., as we called it, went on giving us a fair deal when all other companies were profiteering wildly. But alas! its mines were not on the sea front, and Japan had commandeered the railway, and would not permit Kailan coal to be transported over it until the company had agreed to supply the bulk of its output to the Japanese army, sending the residue to Shanghai. So once more we were left high and dry, and began to import Calcutta coal. Winter can be very bitter at the mouth of the Yangtze.

Even from Peking Chinese merchants were flocking to our semi-security and to that of Hongkong. The quick-witted man whose trade was ruined, finding that Japanese bar-tenders, cabaretiers and geisha-houses usually paid half the estimated price to the conquered race for their buildings, merely multiplied his actual price by two before selling out. Thus a famous silk hong changed hands for \$25,000 and became a brothel, while the Northerner hied himself to Shanghai with the proceeds.

Under the influence of all these bars to legitimate trade, the poorer Chinese had two alternatives; to smuggle or indulge in some other form of outlawry such as guerrilla activities, or to work for the Japs or under their banner. Result a cleavage which, as time went on, had an immense influence on life in our Settlement. Our sympathies, of course, were with the loyalist outlaws, but when they carried their feuds into Settlement boundaries, murdered each other and indulged in gun battles down our thoroughfares, we naturally grew peeved and wondered how long we could talk about "the integrity of foreign spheres of influence" without raising a horse-laugh.

Not that there was anything much we could do about it. Our few square miles were already the heaviest-policed area in the world; it sheltered four million inhabitants, a large proportion of whom were destitute, living in unsavoury

beggars' huts on appropriated land, or merely in streets and doorways. We had rounded up as many as we could into refugee camps supervised by both Chinese and foreigners. Into both foreign areas and into the occupied area penetrated every kind of thug and bad hat because there was no supervision of passports whatsoever, all passport officials having fled. Nippon would naturally have been glad to seize the opportunity of imposing her supervision upon passports, and equally naturally, we foreigners would not agree.

We were thus given a ring-side seat at the terrorism which everywhere reared its head as a result of Japanese ambition, which gulped down undigested lumps of territory without either policing or subduing them adequately; which indeed cared only for the spoils, and was nothing but a modern revival of piracies conducted by this same Country of the Eastern Sea along the shores of that sprawling giant Cathay.

The Competition of the Severed Heads was, I think, the most gruesome game of reprisal at which we were onlookers. The affair of Mr. Tsai had perhaps started the ball (or should I say head?) rolling. It was Japan's way, akin to the throat-cutting of taxi drivers, of punishing those who would not participate in her New Order. Chinese loyalists were, naturally, annoyed. So they retaliated by placing upon the doorsteps of other pro-Japanese elements, the heads of two small-fry newspapermen who had been accepting subsidies for printing Japanese news. Neat tickets attached to the heads made their message clear.

The next move was up to the Japs. So the next head was that of an anti-Japanese, likewise ticketed. And so the grim game went on.

We were checking up on heads to see which side had the bigger score when our interest petered out. For either the terrorists ran out of material (or the material ran out on them) or their victims paid up large sums in ransom. For the next few heads were unrecognisable, or found hanging from trees in Frenchtown so that one could not tell whom they threatened, or they were unticketed, the perpetrators having lamentably failed to follow the rules of the new game. In fact we, in the Settlements, had waxed blasés. When one of our English Municipal Police Administrators received through the post a threat accompanied by three severed fingers he, being busy, merely consigned them to the waste paper basket. A most disillusioning act; just think of the marvellous detective story of which he could have become the hero, "The Trail of the Three Severed Fingers!"

Hand grenades were tossed around, too, in this little war of terrorism, and one had fallen in such an odd place that a controversy arose "for whom was it meant?" This peeved the thrower, for he went back and corrected his mistake though the little newspaper office was empty except for a sleeping coolie whom he awakened. One couple of grenade-tossers functioned from a bicycle, the thrower sitting on the carrier. This incongruous couple did no damage and were not caught.

Chinese New Year fell late in February. It was celebrated by our Chinese friends with as much abandon as ever; they chose to ignore laws promulgated against the firing of crackers, although the law had behind it the good intention of preventing misunderstandings: the sound of a big cracker being very closely akin to that made by a gun.

According to Chinese belief, the Kitchen God, who dwells near or behind the hearth of every householder during the year, pays his annual visit to Heaven to present his report during New Year. Before he leaves he is accordingly feasted and given good wine to warm his heart and to encourage him to forget any disagreements he may have witnessed in the family circle during his sojourn with them. On the last day his lips are liberally smeared with honey either to close them entirely or to induce them to speak nothing but sweet words;

and then with great solemnity his paper image is burnt so as to permit him to ascend in smoke to the higher regions. His image during the year has many forms; he is the cheapest god to buy; I have seen him on sale for a few coppers in the form of Laurel or Hardy, a great favourite with children.

Next, in the time intervening before actual New Year, presents are prepared, family graves weeded, debts paid off, and a great exchange of visits takes place. In 1938, in spite of all the disasters which had befallen them, our Chinese neighbours bustled past Japanese sentries as if in utter forgetfulness of their significance, laden with gifts wrapped in special paper. Every district, as usual, resounded with cracklings and bangings and at the barricades ragged imps, quick to discover that the Japs were enjoying the fun, too, set off crackers at the very feet of their conquerors.

In China the significance of the fire-cracker is that it scares away all demons. Our British Tommies also took a hand in the game, and I greatly fear our police themselves, who were supposed to quell such disturbances, seized odd moments off duty to scare away a few devils for themselves.

Meanwhile temple courtyards were filled with the soft footfall of many suppliants, who tossed into a great copper cauldron strings of silvered paper money to burn for the use of the dear ones aloft who might need it, then, stooping, lit from a fire under the gigantic incense-burner a candle or an incense-stick. On a worn old footstool women wishful of bearing a male child, or anxious to avert trouble, knelt for a brief moment while the carved lion-dog guarding a battered chest for humble contributions watched them from between enormous gilded candlesticks.

On New Year's Day, too, terrorists struck. The Japs had appointed a Chinese Puppet Government, and Chen Lo, its Foreign Minister, whose home was in Shanghai, could not resist the call of established custom. In great secrecy he travelled from Nanking, but as he sat at the traditional feast in the bosom of his family, he was very thoroughly riddled with bullets. A very tense local situation prevailed for some time, as Japan accused both Frenchtown and our Settlement of encouraging and harbouring gunmen, and suggested that, for the safety of everyone concerned, the Land of the Rising Sun should take control. . . .

Occasionally our police would raid a village off the Outside Roads area; capture criminals whose pistols revealed stories of murder to our ballistics expert, and be forced to hand over their captives to the Japs who would claim jurisdiction over them, and let them escape or punish them very lightly. It was a maddening and thankless job policing Shanghai in those days.

I remember once being at Bubbling Well Police Station about a dog licence. A phone call came; before the receiver was on its hook the officer who had lifted it had barked out a few instructions. Then he leaped to the wall, seized his clip and holster and was strapping them on as he made for the door. My mouth was still open to complete my sentence about a dog when the whirring of a self-starter and the sound of boots scrambling into a car made me realise that the station was empty. As I reached the porch the van tore out of the yard.

There was a Japanese driver on Bubbling Well Road who, in his haste, ignoring traffic signals, knocked down a Chinese pedestrian. He got out and leaned over the unconscious man, but seeing a policeman making in his direction, leaped into his car again, accelerated, and **DROVE RIGHT OVER HIS VICTIM'S BODY** in an attempt to escape.

His number was taken, however, and in accordance with local arrangement (extra-territoriality) he came up for trial, while his victim lay between life and death, at the Japanese Court. Result, a fine of five yen (3s. 8d.).

Instances of lust and brutality in the victors were so numerous that they defy enumeration. There were certain stories, immediately hushed up, about their lust being vented on white women. Tales came trickling in from the country, and later from Nanking, where their full bestiality was unleashed. I saw a few things myself, a miserable girl being dragged by three grinning marines towards the hut they used as headquarters. . . . From Chinese servants and friends came overwhelming evidence.

We who passed the barriers were subjected to undignified search and sometimes a cigarette would be snatched from the mouth of a foreigner, or he or she would be forced to bow to some dirty little squirt of a Japanese. There were occasional instances of bayoneting and the Japs it was who murdered Tinkler by bayonet jabs through the intestines when he was defending the mill in his charge from hooligans, then kept him for eight hours on a hot summer day without attention, yielding him up to our Consul only when it was too late.

While I was thinking over the unbridled lust of Japanese soldiery I suddenly realised how much more civilised are our Chinese friends. I had never worked the thing out before; had been, let me confess, often carried away by the charm of Japanese politeness. I had never had cause to weigh its inherent insincerity. In Japan life went smoothly in peace time because its wheels were oiled with flowery courtesy.

But now I came to think it over, woman in Japan is merely a man's chattel. Her marriage is arranged; she is her husband's servant, waits on him hand and foot and bows him into and out of the house. He may take his pleasures where he will; she has no marital rights; but he may send her packing if she displeases him.

Geisha and lights o' love are at the Japanese male's beck and call night and day providing he has the money to pay for them. They are trained up from childhood to cajole, flatter and obey. They are adjuncts to every party he attends, whether as host or guest, while his wife stays at home.

Chastity can scarcely be prized in a country where a girl is sold into a brothel in her teens, and ultimately, when released, is gladly married for the sake of her dowry, which she earned at the Yoshiwara. Women are not supposed to think, in Japan.

Hence it is scarcely surprising that the Japanese soldier takes with him wherever he goes his oriental satrap's attitude. Whether the woman be white or yellow, let his eyes light upon her with desire, and he expects to have his will of her. Stubborn and thick-skinned, he can hardly credit our code of chivalry; perhaps he considers it as hollow a pose as his once vaunted code of bushido.

Compare the status of womanhood in Japan with that in China. Chinese women manage their households and often help their husbands in business. They are treated with courtesy and consulted whenever the matter concerns them. They are highly intelligent but womanly too; they have exquisite taste. They behave with modesty in society and hold purity high among the virtues. If a Chinese lady honoured me with her friendship I should be proud.

Even as I write this chapter showing how Shanghai's history of warlike events shrank to a record of crazy acts of terrorism, I feel my heart contract because so many of our people, men and women, are in the hands of those bestial conquerors.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PUPPETS VERSUS GUERRILLAS

MEANWHILE Japanese faulty psychology had dictated a policy of bullying which had borne just fruit. It is of no use whatever to bully a Chinese; he may appear to comply for a while, but sooner or later he gets his own way again. Over the river, in Pootung, access had been granted once more; but no sooner had male Pootung evacuees gone back to investigate conditions, than the young ones were seized and forced to labour for their masters, without pay. Naturally, a few escaped to warn others, and in consequence the land remained desolate.

For a long time, too, the peasant evacuated from our western hinterland believed that his own soldiers would come back and drive the interloper into the sea, so he saw no value in cultivating crops which would once more be ravaged by warfare. While they held back, guerrilla bands infiltrated. Working as farmers or boatmen during the day, and scattered over a wide area, these were, to the Jap, indistinguishable from the genuine country folk, and could not be bombed from the air nor flushed from their holes.

So nervous, indeed, did the conquerors become, that for some time they shot on sight every Chinese male with a shaven head, mistaking him for a soldier. Actually the Celestial often has his head shaved at the approach of hot weather, as an insurance against lice.

A handful of foreign residents went back to live in Hungjao, though they were hampered by curfew at sundown, and our Municipal police were prevented from patrolling the roads. The telephone, repaired, was their only link with safety. No buses plied, and although an attempt was made to induce tradespeople to deliver purchases, they had to discontinue because Japanese sentries at the barrier helped themselves to anything that took their fancy.

Missie therefore had to venture into the Settlement in Master's car when he went to work; milk, groceries, medicines, laundry and even coal had to be loaded into the dickey and brought back by him on his return from work. During his absence it was quite on the cards that a Jap military lorry would have called at his dwelling and loaded up with plants, shrubs and flowering trees from his garden, and driven off.

The main advantage accruing to the Chinese population from the return of these Hungjao residents was that an order apparently went abroad to treat delinquents more leniently, at least at the barricades, where they were under the public eye. So bayonet stabs were less frequent, and minor transgressors would be seen instead tied to trees for hours, according to the whim of their judges.

While submitting to this form of punishment its victims had the opportunity of watching three or four sentries prodding the bundles and packs of hundreds of pedestrians, in a search for firearms, or for delicacies pleasing to a Jap tongue. You might think that being tied under a hot eastern sun to a tree for hours on end would dull the faculties of even the boldest. But Chinese have a resilience unknown to us westerners, allied with a native gift for acute observation.

Well I remember the five delinquents who, convinced that their captors did not intend to destroy them, evolved a plan of campaign to keep the enemy going all day. A Jap at home, of course, never wears leather footgear. He goes about in tabi, thick-soled socks, and thrusts his big toes through the thong of a sandal to walk abroad. But as a soldier on active service, at least when his activities came under the observation of white men, he was issued with the cheapest and vilest of boots, which he never cleaned. The leather, in

consequence, hardened and wrinkled, and soon the wearer hobbled painfully about as if every step spelled agony.

Our quick-witted Five, tied to their respective trees, and unable to utter a single audible remark lest it be understood, watched the perspiring sentries until a lull enabled them to sit down. At that precise moment one of the Five complained loudly of the tightness of his bonds. His shoulder hurt, *oww!* his shoulder . . . and so on, until in exasperation a tired Jap limped over, clouted him on the side of the head, but also loosened the rope that bound his arm. Shortly afterwards an outcry arose from a younger man; his foot hurt, *oooh!* his foot! . . . and when that had been eased, a third complained bitterly of choking, and the fifth of swollen wrists.

So the game went on. With foreign observers coming and going our sentries dared not turn deaf ears to the outcry, especially as we used to pause on purpose whenever we witnessed excessive bullying. Besides, the continued hullabaloo got on their nerves. . . . By mid-afternoon, the sentries' feet pained more than ever.

So badly did extra-Settlement roads get churned up by Nippon's military trucks that they took to our Settlement streets for transport, and to our delight, the American Marines in charge of the Defence Sector through which they passed, took to halting and searching every vehicle and its occupants. You would see spectators, both Chinese and foreign, with broad grins on their faces, whilst for once the tables were turned and the toughest guys the Marines could muster subjected angry Japs to a minute inspection. Arms were not allowed to be transported or carried through our Settlement without permits, so any found were confiscated.

So Japan the haughty had to sue for an amicable arrangement whereby a reasonable number of transport lorries, carrying mostly unarmed men and no heavy munitions, correctly licensed, obeying traffic signals, and keeping speed laws, were granted permission to proceed. But America reserved the right to resume inspection of such vehicles at any time without warning.

Meanwhile, in the country immediately surrounding Shanghai, Japanese military posts were so far apart and scantily manned that bands of homeless Chinese, hooligans dispossessed by war of all save firearms, or ex-soldiers, roamed the flat plains at will, plundering villages to which humble farmers of their own race had but just returned.

Both Jap soldiers and their Chinese puppets lay doggo during such raids, conveniently deaf, and barricaded in. In Hungjao Ta Tao police were still not allowed arms, and were almost as much hated by their own people as the conquerors.

Months after the Shanghai environs were reported as "mopped up," those foreign residents who had returned to live in Hungjao would constantly hear rifle reports and pistol shots at night. Sometimes these denoted callous execution by Japs of peasants attempting, under cover of darkness, the perilous crossing of railway boundary and barbed wire back into our Settlement.

Why, you ask, attempt it at all? Why not stay where they were? Simply because, without warning, the barriers had been suddenly closed to Chinese. First the desolate fields had cried out for planting and tillage, next access was freely granted, and those who had fields plodded patiently to and fro daily, returning into the safety zone at curfew with their vegetables. Then came the edict bottling them up on the wrong side of the wire, with no roofs to their heads, and only a pile of rubble for home.

As a ruse to trap subjects under the new régime it was not a marked success. One by one, at night, or even in broad daylight, stealthy figures crept back under the wire, often leaving scraps of clothing as mute evidence of their passage. Of the twenty odd shot in every twenty-four hours, probably two hundred negotiated the wire unseen.

Others, actual dwellers in the occupied area, would risk death twice over for a bottle of cooking oil only to be purchased in town. Thus did the aftermath of war cheapen human life! Looters, too, with the same incredible levity, challenged death to transport piloumed copper wire, or rice.

The Japanese in charge of the western barrier at that time was Lieutenant Imai. He had issued special passes to foreigners residing in Hungjao, to Telephone Company employees and to Public Works officials of every rank, from architects to Public Benevolent Cemetery coolies who accompanied beggar corpses to their last funeral pyre off MacLeod Road, and even to "mo dung" coolies who pushed odoriferous containers of household sanitation out to farmers who used it to manure their fields.

As our French friends would say, "que voulez-vous?"—what can you expect? Give a Chinese a pass and he will at once set about profiting therefrom. The control and sale of rice having by this time been taken over so that Nippon could make a rake-off, it had become a heinous crime, as well as a remunerative one, to smuggle rice across the boundaries, free of duty.

For several weeks one little band of reprobates, righteously armed with Lieutenant Imai's pass, smuggled rice into the Settlement undiscovered. What mattered the enforced tribute of a deep bow, hat in hand, to the sentries, when one could have a good old laugh afterwards at their stupidity?

The trick was discovered at last by a Jap who suddenly found it curious that coffins should constantly be journeying back into the Settlement as well as outwards. He stuck his bayonet through the rotted wood, and out poured a rich stream of white gram!

A yet more unbelievable trick was that of a "mo dung" coolie who, after wheeling house ordure out, contacted a rice boat up some hidden creek and crammed his tainted vehicle with rice. In this case the number of journeys he made, and the fact that his little handcart seemed as heavy on its return journey as on its way out, gave the show away.

Smuggling on a larger scale was, of course, going on up and down the long coastline of Cathay all the while, and I wager is going on up to this day. Many a battered junk with dark ribbed sails carries a cargo other than fish, and slips up some isolated creek to land it. Every Chinese is a gambler at heart, and what is smuggling but a gamble?

Other ships, too, were getting away with it until Japan started stopping and inspecting the cargoes of foreign vessels. Here she was not entirely in the wrong.

For at least fifty years the practice had been rife in the Far East of registering a ship with a foreign consulate, whereas in reality she traded under the auspices and full management of Chinese. Originally this plan was evolved to avoid search by Customs when running contraband or guns, and perhaps also to stave off piracy; since attack on foreign vessels often brought reprisals.

Naturally, with Japan out to blockade the coast the old dodge was working full blast. A Chinese would "sell" his ship to an impoverished foreigner, Eurasian with British nationality, Portuguese, Spaniard, Italian, German, Briton, American. The buyer had, of course, no money to pay for the sale; he was given a handsome gratuity for lending his name; the money would be temporarily advanced to him by the actual Chinese owner. A reputable lawyer was usually employed; as far as he knew the transaction was genuine.

The new "owner" would at once register his "purchase" with his Consulate. Needless to say, a Consul would be powerless to question such action, though he might have a shrewd idea that it was all eyewash and would involve him in a spot of bother later on. As soon as the ship was duly registered and authorised to fly the flag of its new "owner" the latter would mortgage the whole concern back to its real owner, who would continue to operate freely under a brand-

new foreign flag. As soon as Japan interfered with the vessel, a protest would be filed with the Consul concerned by its nominal owner.

Japan herself forced upon China the smuggling of currency by foisting an unbacked paper money upon the areas she occupied. For while Nippon forbade anyone to bring legal tender notes into her zones of influence, guerrilla leaders would shoot on sight anyone found in THEIR territory with Japan's new "federal reserve" notes in their possession. Yet dealers, to make a living, had to trade between the two zones.

Of course it was bound, in the long run, to come out in the wash. So soon as Japanese garrisons delegated to Chinese underlings some of their heaviest duties, which they would, of course, do for a consideration, squeeze would ensure the necessary passage of goods from and into guerrilla country; since the art and science of squeeze originated in this part of the world. To both puppet guards and Chinese dealers it would be a routine matter of bargaining; how much to let my \$100,000 worth of goods through.

There would be amicable chaffering over the deal at some tea house one evening, and the next day a seemingly innocent load of contraband would pass smoothly through. He who in the end paid the squeeze would be the ultimate buyer, to whom the price would be higher than before. In the case of double-crossing on either side, a gunman would probably be hired to execute the culprit.

Japan had at that time a far-flung blockade embracing eleven towns which commanded most of China's old trade routes. One port, Ningpo, had escaped. Situated on the coastline south of Hangchow Bay, it was known to us foreigners chiefly through the pidgin expression "have go Ningpo more far." This, being interpreted, meant that So-and-so had gone a long way away.

In that part of China functioned many different types of irregulars, the Red Spears, the Patriotic Salvation Army, and portions of the Kuomintang's central army. It had proved too prickly for the Japs, though one of their papers, the *Shanghai Mainichi*, printed an eloquent article urging extermination of guerrillas. "Like swarming flies they flee before the Japanese advance" complained the *Mainichi* bitterly, "only to filter back in the wake of a Japanese withdrawal."

The Chinese is, of course, a guerrilla fighter per excellence. Discipline does not appeal to him. He is fearless, lighthearted and shrewd, but he likes to exercise originality. He reckons he can always muddle through if left to his own devices. Also, he is the world's best natural actor.

All these gifts combine with his physical ability to cover great distances, "eating off the land," and make of him a dangerous individual fighter. For ten years before the outbreak in 1937 the Chinese Red Army had made exhaustive study and practice of guerrilla tactics. Extreme mobility, the habit of travel by night; unexpected attack in unpredictable quarters, followed by immediate dispersal of the attackers; all these wiles were calculated to confuse Nippon's troops and render them highly nervous.

An illuminating sketch of guerrilla activities along railway lines in enemy hands was published in Shanghai's *China Weekly Review* (whose editor, J. B. Powell, was so badly treated in prison camp ere he was repatriated that his two feet had to be amputated). For their train-wrecking inspiration the Irregulars used Colonel Lawrence of Arabia's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. No sooner, however, had they mastered the art of wrecking a train by explosive than, with a sequence and ingenuity of mind typically Chinese, they thought up an equally effective but cheaper method.

This consisted in removing spikes at important curves, so that under the weight of heavy munition waggons the tracks would spread and cause a crash.

No sooner was this trick discovered than the Japs started sending a light train ahead. This sprang the rails without capsizing, and immediately a band



of engineers poured out to repair the damage. So our guerrillas thought up another one.

They painted wooden spikes iron grey and inserted them instead of steel. These were strong enough to bear the weight of a light train but successfully wrecked anything heavy. For a variation, numbers of rails were carried away and hidden.

Nippon next forced Chinese farmers living alongside the tracks to examine them daily and report any damage. Whenever they failed, their villages were burnt up and often they themselves were executed. Hence desolation along both sides of the track, for peasants forsook them as soon as they found themselves caught between two impossible alternatives. On the other hand, a farmer would sometimes help his compatriots to hide rails, and then proceed solemnly to collect a reward from Japanese headquarters for announcing their disappearance.

Later on, when Japan was attacking the triple Wuhan cities of Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang, a spokesman declared "We shall go on until we crush the spirit of China." False psychology again. For a Chinese never accepts defeat. Not from any particular heroism in himself, but from a conviction of his own ability to defeat in the long run, by patience, wiliness and an oblique passivity, any forces massed against him, whether physical or intellectual.

FOR OF WHAT VALUE IS DEFEAT AS A WEAPON IF YOUR OPPONENT DOES NOT REALISE IT? NOT DEFEAT ITSELF, SO MUCH AS RECOGNITION THEREOF, CONSTITUTES AN OPPONENT'S VICTORY.

You remember the quotation "He who complies against his will . . . is of his own opinion still"? Thus, even as a vassal of Nippon, every individual Chinese, while biding his time, still knows himself to be the better man.

Hankow fell in the end, but before it went Father Jacquinet de Besange, who had created the Jacquinet Zone out of chaos, the Jesuit priest with shrewd smile and cajoling voice, had slipped out of Shanghai, going by way of Hongkong and thence by air and river to Hankow. There he hoped again to persuade the authorities to grant space for a refugee zone. He only partly succeeded; but with his vast experience and knowledge of human nature, he brought as much help as was possible to the outcasts of war. Three years later we read that he was journeying to Hongkong to help with prisoners-of-war relief there . . . our own people, this time.

"So many gods, so many creeds" . . . Though I am no Catholic, it took some of the pain from my heart when I knew that the Fighting Priest had made those derelicts his business, but it confirmed my worst fears, too, for he goes only where misery is blackest.

When it became obvious to the Chinese military authorities that the eastern part of the Lunghai railway, from Hsuehchowfu to Haichow, would shortly fall into Japanese hands, they hit upon an ingenious scheme to ensure its thorough destruction. Like most great thoughts the idea was simple. The peasant populace was merely invited to help itself. Knowing China, one realises what hundred and one uses a Chinese will find for the most humdrum object. Steel rails and good strong thick Oregon pinewood ties! Who would hesitate? Just when thousands of dwellings had been bombed to smithereens. And as to any left over, by a system of barter they soon travelled wide afield.

When no other use could be found for them, the sleepers proved extremely useful for coffins, of which China has millions, not only for the dead but for the living, since every person of middle age and good standing buys one against the day of his demise. Once the sleepers had been sawn off short for coffins, no Jap on earth could utilise them for a railway.

It was during this year of 1938 that the world heard of the mighty and seemingly endless tiek made by those students and professors uprooted by Japanese aggression and determined to carry on with their studies in freedom. Not only in Shanghai, but everywhere reached by Jap domination, educational institutions of every kind were ravaged. A fury was unleashed against them; bombed, shelled, stripped, and then occupied by Nippon's troops, every one, whether Chinese-owned, American-sponsored, or property of some other foreign body. It was made clear that drastic blows were aimed at the youth of China; those precious sons of whom Chinese think so much. Later, in a fanfare of bombast, schools were opened under Japanese management, to inculcate pro-Japanese and anti-Kuomintang sentiments.

I have no doubt the humbler Chinese are allowing their sons to profit by this gratuitous education handed out by Nippon. Do not forget that Chiang Kai Shek himself was educated for a number of years in Japan itself. But the wealthier lads had no intention of accepting such tuition.

Students in China have always taken a hand in political demonstrations, waxed fiery over wrongs, and gone on strike when they pleased, either to obtain reinstatement of recalcitrant students or dismissal of unpopular professors. They have been accustomed to get their way, since the Powers-That-Ought-To-Be, dependent upon their fees, have usually compromised in the immemorial way of the East.

So China's youth, possessing a very decided will of its own, and burning with hatred against the aggressor, took the simplest and most obvious step. To us it may seem fantastic, even somewhat cowardly, that these sons of wealthy merchants should prefer to stick to books while their country fights endless roarguard actions against an invader.

But, ere we condemn, several factors should be taken into consideration which render the situation in China very different from what it would be in a smaller country. There is an inexhaustible supply of man power for soldiery among the four hundred million without necessity of calling upon the handful of intellectuals, who must be reserved as statesmen and leaders of the future.

China had pitifully few colleges, schools and universities even before the devastation, and very many of these were financed and staffed by foreigners. Her educated class is meagre; an illiterate peasant can fire a rifle and lay down his life with far less actual loss to the nation.

The Executive Yuan was therefore fully in agreement with any scheme which would keep a nucleus of intelligentsia intact, and many professors and students worked their way gradually, by train, road and river, westwards to Changsha. Temples were usually selected, both on the way and at journey's end, as domiciles: needy monks were always glad of rental, and a Chinese temple is particularly uncluttered in comparison with churches of western nations.

At Changsha in the autumn of 1937 the new temporary University received staff and students from the National Tsing Wha University, the National and Peking University and the Nankai University. But giant Japanese bombers, intent on destruction of Chinese learning, sought out the fugitives and plastered Changsha while the tide of battle crept closer up the Yangtze delta.

So this time the authorities decided to take sanctuary in the far interior of Yunnan Province at Kunming, and with the usual adaptability of the country they changed their name to "Lienta," or Southwestern Union. The problem facing them was how to evacuate 1,000 students, 100 professors and other members of the administrative staff, along with equipment, a distance of a thousand miles with very indifferent transportation facilities.

Some went down to Hongkong via Canton by rail, from Hongkong to Haiphong in French Indo-China by coastal steamer, and from Haiphong to Kunming by rail.

But the more adventurous had been fied by earlier evacuations: they wanted to see something of their Mother Earth; in other words, to walk. A retired army officer, Lieut.-Gen. Huang, was appointed to lead them, after physically unfit applicants had been weeded out. They were clad in military type of uniform and placed under military discipline. Their number was three hundred and ten.

Biologists, botanists, geologists and doctors were among the number; a certain amount of data was collected on the long march, which took sixty-eight days, on only four of which native junks and other primitive vehicles were used over difficult terrain.

They travelled light, with two trucks accompanying them the whole way to carry their luggage. Each had a cotton-padded overcoat, such as Chinese soldiers wear, and along the road most of them invested in huge peasant hats which served against sun and rain, to carry water and to sit in. There were blistered feet along the way, but light hearts.

The total cost of that thousand mile walk, including pocket-money along the way, and all incidentals such as food and lodging, was £600, less than £2 per head, for a hike that lasted just over two months. The South Western Union University opened early in May at Kunming with a thousand reassembled students, but when autumn term started the numbers had swollen to over two thousand. Some lived in caves in the hillside peculiar to the district; there can be found girls as well as boys intent upon education at all costs.

I have often thought that there is one trait the Chinese share with the British; they never accept defeat.

## CHAPTER IX

### SHANGHAI FLOODS: PHILIPPINES

APPARENTLY in the judgment of the high gods Shanghai had not suffered enough from war, pestilence and famine during the preceding eleven months; so they smote the city hip and thigh with a flood.

The swift-flowing, muddy Whangpoo was silting up because the Japs had confiscated the gear of the Whangpoo Conservancy Board and no dredging had been done except around the wharves they had occupied. But the turgid banks did not betray us; only a steady, pitiless downpour day after day, that filled overburdened drains and seeped over highways and byways until slowly and successively kerbs disappeared from view and pavements themselves were swallowed up in the maw of muddy waters.

Row after row of little shops and Chinese dwellings, stone-flagged or mud-floored, their doorways on pavement level, swamped. The small "chair man" with his one pathetic show-piece, a handsomely-upholstered sofa flanked by two easy chairs, turned them hastily upside down on top of each other and himself scrambled upon a table to live. The "tin can man" had to weight his buckets and saucepans and garbage-tins lest they float out on to the road. Profiting by war-time experience, a few bold spirits filled sandbags with purloined earth and thus held encroaching waters at bay.

Often a small ragamuffin would be posted at the threshold, where only an upright plank set athwart the sill braved the tide, under orders to bail constantly. He would vary his twenty-four hour job by battles with other imps similarly engaged across the street or a few doors down; and the filthy water sluiced gaily through the air aimed at his opponent's opportunist turned back, and woe betide the unwary passer-by who got in the way!

A certain busy housewife who owned only a flooded ground-floor room, worried by her brat's wailing, with great presence of mind set it adrift upon the tide, in a tin bath-tub; and as I passed the infant was gurgling with delight as he bobbed down the expanse, snatching at flotsam with grubby fingers.

In the early days, as we set off to work, our powers of ingenuity, observation and memory were taxed to the utmost. "Let me see, where did I see a dry stretch of pavement at a bus stop? And can I walk dry-shod from there to my office? Or if I go on past my place of business and alight at St. George's, can I retrace my steps without having to wade?"

But soon the floods got beyond such finicking. Willy-nilly we all had to wade, even those of us who could still cover the distance by car. When I reached the school entrance, I stepped on to a raised gangway of planks laid over trestles, and, balancing carefully, minced along over twelve yards of water to our west porch, from which my pupils watched with critical eyes.

The Boys' School entrance was worse than ours. I watched one little gang of seven boys bargaining with a wheelbarrow coolie. They only wanted to go a matter of thirty yards, but he was quoting profiteering rates; and, moreover, warned by previous experience, exacting payment in advance.

One tiffin time Municipal Public Works sent trucks to both schools to transport all pupils to the nearest dry bus or tram terminus, where they were dumped en bloc. The resultant congestion on trams and buses can be imagined! Ultimately, one day, two hundred of our pupils arrived wet through and had to stay and cut themselves sandwiches and boil cocoa for luncheon; and at that, the Powers said "No school to-morrow."

Many big buildings and blocks of flats over the following week-end were isolated; lifts could only function as far down as the first floor. Railless trams went out of commission, cars and buses stalled in the most outrageous positions, road surfaces cracked treacherously, and not until some vehicle broke its axle over the hidden fissure did the overworked Public Works Department locate it and set iron signs about it in warning.

Street urchins set a premium upon their services for pushing stalled cars out of deep water. If the unfortunate driver had not enough "small money" to meet their requirements one and all clamped themselves on to his bonnet, his running-board, and his spare wheel bracket until he somehow contrived to meet this novel form of street blackmail.

The British Bus Company provided solid wooden slipways at each principal flooded bus stop. But owing to the predatory instincts of the Chinese poor, each of these gangways had to be individually watched by a uniformed employee, who also helped people out of rickshaws into buses so that they should not wet their feet. Some big buildings managed a kind of floating dock opposite their main entrance.

As to the rickshaw coolies, they profited abominably, but with infectious lightheartedness. Five cents to cross the road; ten cents to pick you off the pavement and wait with you at the flooded bus stop until a bus came. One of my pupils, defeated in her efforts to make her rogue take her across the street—a distance of four yards—for less than five cents, made him wade up and down in the middle of the thoroughfare until she considered he had earned his money! Only constant rubbing elbows with the guile of the Orient could have taught her to administer such poetic justice.

It was of old a favourite gibe of the west that Orientals hate rain, carry umbrellas into battle, and observe an unofficial truce until the downpour is over. Personally, I can't help feeling that there's a good deal of sense in such a method. . . .

However that may be, I decided to sally forth at the height of the floods to see how the little market which had grown up like a mushroom off Edinburgh

Road ever since Japan collared the Hongchew Market, was progressing. First I had to have gum boots.

I tried our British stores. Their sizes were wrong, yet I dared not go barefoot, because of the innumerable geims from human excitement, overflowing sewage, etc. Finally, and with shame, I broke my private boycott and bought cheap Japanese gum boots which have lasted me to this day. Yes, the Little Yellow Gentlemen, whose feet are small and squat, stocked large sizes for the foreign buyer when our own shops didn't.

Edinburgh Road, in spite of its seething waters, was as jostling and lively a thoroughfare as ever. Rickshaw coolies paddled along, lewd and raucously gay at their recent earnings, a little scallywag peddled his papers unperturbed; household servants cycled or picked a careful barelegged way over the invisible road; an occasional car hooting and splashing sent out a tidal wave which engulfed carelessly balanced individuals and sent them headlong.

Sight of the market—an open-air affair but for the few ragged giant umbrellas—refuted every libel about the Chinese and water. As brisk and as crowded as ever, it was functioning with noisy jollity. Merchants, unable to rest their vegetable baskets on the kerb, floated them. A hoity-toity old dame doing her shopping in a rickshaw spat out invective at me when I tried to take her photo. Everywhere swirled the thick yellow flood; and nobody cared. Shanghai had weathered far worse things, and survived. . . .

It was the wealthier people and the intelligentsia who recognised the danger. After all, the one great advantage of poverty is that it does not make much difference to you under what régime you labour; so long as you earn your bowl of rice and some kind of a roof, rulers may come and go: your lot remains practically the same.

We foreigners, of course, had our own private point of view which did not quite coincide with that of the thinking Chinese. For years we had been living in an International Settlement of which China was always demanding the control, because its very existence contradicted the "sovereign rights" of the country. This state of affairs had induced in us long before a sense of insecurity, of the evanescence of worldly possessions. Oriental philosophy all about us aiding, perhaps, we had become able to await the outcome of each new threat with a shrug: *Tout passe, tout casse, tout lasse*.

We weren't callous, or indifferent to the rights of China. We held thankfully on to extra-territoriality because, if it had not been, we could not have existed. Though we personally knew many Chinese of utmost integrity in business, we all knew, too, of the corruptibility of Chinese judges. No white man would ever stand a chance in a Chinese court of law however innocent he might be, unless, of course, he bribed higher than the other fellow.

Besides, the Chinese had a little habit of bringing a case into court as a form of blackmail; several friends and relations would blithely swear the hated foreigner into prison for something he had never done. Not that we were their only victims. Well do I remember cases of this kind against Chinese doctors whose patients had died. If the victim paid up sufficiently the case would be dropped.

Of course, if China enforced her new laws. . . . But could she? At the time, no; her jurisdiction no longer obtained; and only the boon of extra-territoriality kept many of us out of the clutches of Japan.

But, as I have said, we were inured to insecurity. Not only Chinese had eaten bitterness during the fighting round about. We had had ample opportunity to observe the old-fashioned armament which the Japs had been using; the measure of their success was a measure of the appalling lack of equipment among their opponents. Some of this, we knew, was due to squeeze. Money

had been collected, especially for planes, but we wondered how much of it had gone to the right objective.

As war receded, we had recognised and applauded the Lone Airman: literally and actually the only plane left to the Chinese. Night after night in fair weather he came winging back out of the blue, from some far western hidey hole undiscovered by the Japs who prowled about all day looking for his machine. With the hair-trigger nerves which were our war legacy, I used to awaken merely at the steady drone of this gallant airman's approach, before the fierce salvo that rose to greet him, or the concentrated activity of searchlights. He would circle, cannily select his spot, and drop a bomb or two. The barrage would affect him not at all; he'd soar higher, mark out another point, and swoop upon it. Not until I heard him safely droning back did I turn over contentedly to sleep again. Finally, his landing field must have been pitched too far back for any further visits to Shanghai; but we still heard rumours of his nationality, said to be Belgian, and of the fact that towards the end he had no more bombs, but came over just the same, to make the Japs waste ammunition. . . .

Father Jacquinot had returned from Hankow, Chungking, and the Chinese lines with heartening tales of China's excellent morale and her capacity to hold out longer. He had a vivid little yarn to spin about how he stood at dusk of a misty evening in Hankow as it fell, amid the smoke of gunfire and burning buildings, watching troop after troop of Japanese marching along the darkening roads, passing each other in the heavy, sullen silence of utter exhaustion, while here and there, close at hand or far away, broke out sporadic firing, showing that all Chinese troops had not yet evacuated.

Suddenly two columns of marching men, each going in an opposite direction, noticed simultaneously something odd in the appearance of their neighbours. One column moved soundlessly, in a kind of lope; the others waddled slightly and their uncomfortable boots rang on the hard street. Enemies!

The quarters were too close and the discovery too sudden for use of arms. Each man leapt yelling upon his opponent, seizing him by the ears, and, getting him down, banged his skull savagely against the kerb until the brains spilled out. "If ever I wanted proof that both nations are barbarians, I had it then," said Jacquinot.

At which comment I smiled quietly. Fighting is a primitive job; the more savage you are the longer you stay alive. . . . I don't imagine our troops in Burma and New Guinea have been doing much kid-glove stuff.

Not only Jacquinot returned. Mothers and children who had gone away to the seaside, to Wei Hai Wei, Chefoo, Tientsin, etc., for the summer and been immobilised there had returned; sometimes dodging battle between both sides of the Whangpoo. The Hongkong and Manila refugees had come back; now, as Nanking fell, a few escapees were brought down by the British navy, with bloody tales of massacre and rape and drunken bestiality. There was no escape from knowledge of what was happening all about us.

The Chinese conception of buying time with space had, of course, seized upon our imaginations. Shrewd, phlegmatic and long-suffering, how long could these sons of Cathay endure? They are known, of course, as clever bargainers. But in this case they had to depend upon ultimate aid from outside, from a maritime nation who could free their ports from blockade; and Hitler in Europe was making his meaning clear. . . .

Thousands of miles of fertile land laid waste; millions of lives gone; export and import possible only through smuggling or conciliation. True, the Burma Road was being completed, but that never had the value propaganda attached to it; the amount of supplies got through were never, could never be, sufficient to equip an army of millions.

Yet we who lived among the Chinese, knowing their capacity for long-

distance calculation, their canny psychological estimate of character, the clever intricacy of their loans, felt that they could outlast the Japs from sheer superiority of morale.

Japanese are stubborn; they never admit or practise withdrawals; with the veneer of modern civilisation they have also acquired its faults; impatience, nervousness, short-sightedness, lack of consideration for the other fellow. If the force of Chinese pressure came up against the immovable post of Japanese might, the Chinese would withdraw. Yes, but wait. He'd come again and again, interminably; always withdrawing in time to keep his energy intact; again and again, until finally his persistence snapped off the "immovable" post. A Jap would butt his bullet head against a wall until it broke him; a Chinese wouldn't.

While I write, a certain amount of agitation is going on among amateur strategists who want to run the war. They consider (if consider is the word) that an immediate effort should be made to reopen the Burma Road to China. I wish I could persuade them what an infinitesimal life-line that road really is; how inadequate, what lives it cost to send over its treacherous hairpin bends and deep ravines and through the numerous landslides, the 166 lorries per day which were all it carried at its best.

China is too huge a country to be saved by the reopening of one paltry road. Would you talk of bringing relief to Hitler from the British and Allied blockade if you knew that a single road still gave him access to dangerous sea lanes? I think not. Because somehow the size of Europe impinges upon one's consciousness when the size of Cathay does not. With the collapse of French Indo-China and the subjugation of Thailand the Burma Road and its vital bridges can be bombed from the air. The smashing of a single bridge over a swift torrent can dislocate the route for months. No, Cathay can only be won back by total war on land, sea and in the air. There is no cheap way out. And since China will have to do her share it will take months, years, to train her millions in the latest weapons of war, once they have received them.

We could not, of course, calculate the incalculable; but every foreigner resident in China then felt that Japan would not, in the ultimate reckoning, be allowed to overrun China and make it her vassal. I say every foreigner advisedly, Germans as much as English and Americans: we were all losing trade, livelihood, investments. So if it was obvious to us that the great white nations must ultimately take a hand, it must have been equally obvious to thinking Chinese.

As the floods receded in Shanghai, June was drawing to a close. A long hot humid summer was upon us, and we had nowhere to go. War had shaken us rudely out of our ruts, we rejected Japan as holiday resort not solely from reasons of boycott, but because nasty little tales had reached us of Jap officers travelling on the Jap express ships who, being often very drunk, attempted to share the berths of women passengers, and had to be thrown out.

Besides, in Japan one would have to submit to war-time restrictions, one's money would be changed at a loss; news would fail to reach us, radios disseminate only official Nipponese propaganda. All the old sociable resorts along the northern portion of China's coast were in the grip of Japan too, submitting to curfew and martial law. You couldn't walk in the country because you'd meet up with guerrillas.

Some of us suggested going on a cruise. "A month on a ship," said I with a shudder, "in the tropics *and* in the typhoon season. Call that a holiday?" Others suggested French Indo-Chinese mountain country, but we elicited the fact that summer was the rainy season there, and it didn't rain, it sluiced down. By the time most of my friends had decided to brave Shanghai's heat and remain, our local Medical Officer announced that, if possible, every white

woman and child should be out of Shanghai by 1st June, as, with the terrible congestion (150,000 in refugee camps alone) the insanitary conditions of camps and beggars' and squatters' huts, infected water, flies, mosquitoes, etc., he considered that ours would become a cholera port and worse ere summer was half through.

So I took Dog Tony to the Philippines. He and I had done much vagabonding together; Japan, Wei Hai Wei, Chefoo, Hongkong, Manchuria. But until I selected a Dutch boat he had never endured the indignity of a kennel. In order that he should comply with regulations and suffer as little as possible, I had an unusually large kennel made which I myself could occupy comfortably enough.

He was duly coaxed inside and locked in while I went to my cabin to unpack. But in less than twenty minutes came a breathless Chinese steward. "Missie, please you come quick. Your dog have break kennel, come out on deck, walk everywhere look for you."

Sure enough, my sturdy Airedale had, in spite of his eleven years, dealt so thoroughly with his kennel that it had to be scrapped. A little blood coloured the splintered wood; his jaws and his paws were sore. I tied him in his usual position on a boat deck, under the shelter of a lifeboat, and left him for a while. Knowing Dutchmen to be sticklers for correct behaviour, I felt guilty.

Hurrying out on deck later I was in time to see the Skipper in close converse with Tony. There could be no milder creature than my dog, insofar as human contacts were concerned, and, tactfully tip-toeing away, I left him to plead his own cause. A friendly hand was caressing his velvety head, he was panting with pleasure, his tongue lolling.

So there was no further incarceration for him, and on a night of threatened typhoon, a special message sent down from the bridge arranged for his shelter in a small unused storeroom. Dutchmen, thought I, are sports.

We arrived off Manila flying the dread yellow flag. A Chinese baby had died on board and we were in quarantine. Our Dutch officers turned hosts and rigged up a radio on deck and we danced in the breeze while Manila sweltered. I had thoroughly enjoyed the spotless ship and excellent food; it was no hardship to me to remain on board longer than expected.

Finally, twenty-eight hours late, we disembarked. Some confusion was caused by the fact that Tony had been entered on the ship's manifest as "one dog in kennel," and the kennel had vanished. I had to bring the Chief Officer along to support my assertion that my quiet-looking airedale had demolished it. Then I almost missed my last train to the mountains because of Manila's "rest hour," which seemed to fluctuate elastically between twelve and two, and immobilise all porters. When I did find one, several followed, and attached themselves to my luggage, dog, and a taxi, and I had to part with considerable largesse to free myself.

We then sped through Manila streets, passing diminutive Filipino ponies drawing the native two-wheel carromata, a light carriage with side-curtains and an awning. By the skin of my teeth I caught my train and settled down for a six hours' journey over a hot, damp, fertile plain planted with sugar cane and rice.

It was a primitive scene, which three hundred years of Spanish domination and later American occupation could have done little to alter. Everywhere were carabaos or water-buffalo, the mainstay of Filipino farmers, who used them for milk, for ploughing, as beasts of burden, for transport, and finally for meat. Many had horns measuring six feet from tip to tip, springing almost straight out from each side of the head, formidable weapons indeed when the carabao, as he sometimes did, took a dislike to the smell of a white man and charged,



Usually a buffalo proceeds at a lumbering walk, but he can move with great speed. When he is released from his labours he makes for the nearest water or mud-wallow, where he submerges up to his eyes. It is said that a carabao will sicken and die if he be denied his daily bath. Watching from a train window, admiring tranquil pools fringed with high reeds and grass, one is suddenly surprised to meet a pair of little, cunning pig-eyes between branching horns. So still does the animal remain in the water that his presence could easily be overlooked.

While the great beast wallows, a small child in some specially constructed shelter of plaited bamboo or reed watches the household pet somnolently, having ridden half-asleep on his back to the pool, while grown-ups seek their huts for the afternoon siesta, so that the fields appear almost deserted except for countless submerged carabaos.

The Filipino lowland peasant hut is built of plaited bamboo or of wood, supported on tall stilts, from eight to ten feet long, roofed with thatch or palm leaves. Each village is snugly enclosed by a thick growth of banana palms and hemp, waving tattered banners, with a few tall coco-palms to break the monotony.

Under the houses, built in this fashion because of the damp, are stacked supplies and instruments. Here, too, domestic animals gather to sleep, dark grey, low-bellied pigs, skinny chickens and dogs, bullock and water buffalo.

When a typhoon sweeps across the plain it frequently demolishes such huts; but they can be rebuilt in a few days. I saw one which had been blown bodily from its supporting stilts and had come to rest on the ground a few yards away. The inhabitants were leisurely cutting strong new supports with their bolos, or two-edged knives, while living on the ground under the ruins of their roof.

Though civilisation had brought road and rail close to hand, the peasant living in such a village rarely travelled more than a few miles from his home. His womenfolk wove clothing from the fibre of hemp, pineapple and palm leaf; they plaited his great conical hat from reeds; his fishing tackle was likewise made from material close at hand. Yams or sweet potato provided him with a useful, recurrent crop; the numerous watercourses are plentifully stocked with fish; coconut and bamboo provided him with further sustenance. Light at night came from a floating wick in coconut oil cupped in a half shell.

As afternoon mellowed there was magic beauty in the scene. The great glossy tattered leaves of banana and hemp hung like bright flags of jade around each enclosure, giving a false impression of coolness. Freshly planted rice in the foreground was yellowy-green against flooded loam, and a clump of feathery bamboos danced gaily as a warm breath of wind caught them. In the background, behind irregularly-heaped purple mountains, piles of stormy dark-blue clouds. To those Mountain Provinces I was bound; soon the air would freshen and I would have to don a woollen sweater to climb by motor bus into the distant hills.

Passing to the end of the coach for iced drinking water I looked into the next compartment and met the smile of a fat, good-natured Filipina, in native costume. This consisted of a transparent bolero of some gauzy, stiff material, prettily embroidered, with ballooning elbow sleeves. After I found out this material was piña, woven by hand from the fibre of the pineapple leaf. Her long, flowered silk skirt seemed to be swathed in some intricate fashion, so as to show spotless white-lace petticoat beneath. Later I learned that the swathed appearance was due to a long train, part of the costume, but tucked on everyday occasions into the waistbelt. Beneath her skirt peeped brown wrinkled bare feet thrust into embroidered satin mules, which made her walk in a characteristic, slipshod way.

Later, when I got into conversation with them, the husband told me with pride that he had been down to Manila to buy fighting cocks. For the best he had paid twenty-eight pesos, 56s. I remembered then that we were travelling first class, and that in spite of the fact that he wore his shirt hanging out over his pants instead of tucked in, he might be quite a personage, for shirts are worn this way by his countrymen.

Indeed, when they got out at the next stop I gaped at young Filipino bloods in grey, bright blue, lavender or even emerald green pants cut apache fashion with tight waists and ankles; shirts of the most beautiful flowered *crêpe de Chine* hanging out, white kid or suede ornamental shoes, coloured socks and silk handkerchiefs to match. To top this gay scheme on a slim, effeminate form, a panama or woven raffia hat was perched rakishly over roving black eyes and white flashing teeth.

Oddly enough, few of the men smoke; whereas the average lower-class Filipina when she reaches middle age is most frequently seen with a large cigar stuck in her toothless mouth, or a pipe upon which she draws with avidity. Either that, or she chews betel. Both habits induce constant spitting.

Just as our train was gathering speed a little *carromata* drew up with a flourish while the coachman called out to our engine driver who, immediately, with Filipino politeness, put on his brakes, whereupon everyone in the *carromata* and a few other late comers leaped into our train.

Every now and then an attendant came and dusted us and our belongings with a little broom. The carriages were infested with ants, and this dusting may have done some good. Later, after a cool motor bus drive, I unpacked a paper-backed novel and propped myself comfortably to read in bed; but ants issued in endless procession from the back binding of the little book, and I had to apply insect powder freely. Luckily, being an old hand, I never travel without it.

When I had time to look around, I was astounded at the excellence of Public Roads, Works and Health in the Philippines, because the United States, which was alone responsible, had raised the standard in forty years and in spite of constant opposition. By means of tariff privileges and remarkable administration the standard of living was indeed high.

Yet the Philippine Archipelago must have presented to pioneer Americans a formidable task. It takes a fast liner two days and nights to steam past its 100,000 square miles of territory comprising 300 inhabited islands; and from the beginning to the end of her administration, America only once used money from her own treasury for the benefit of the islands. Which means that, except for Army, Navy and Air Force garrison costs, the islands were made to pay for their own modernisation.

Miles and miles of beautiful roads were built. Manila was practically reconstructed; government schools sprang up even among the Wild Tribes of the mountains; strenuous Public Health efforts brought the death rate from cholera, plague, malaria and dysentery down, and kept these diseases under control.

The Filipino is much darker-skinned than the Chinese, and is of Malay origin, speaking English in a manner quaintly foreign, since nowadays he learns only from native teachers, and hailing the white man as an equal. "What can I do for your beloved self, Ma'am?" was my greeting in a shop; meant seriously, the flowery mode of address probably betrayed some translation in his mind from the Spanish.

Time has a way of taking its revenge on people who attempt to outstrip its slow march by forcing the pace. Sudden advance in education of Oriental people teaches them that their brains are as good as ours, in a narrow scholastic sense. From this realisation to conceit (an Eastern trait) is but a step. Testing

his quick brain against that of the white man, the native says, in effect, "I'm as good as you; let me rule." We see it in India, in the Philippines, in the foreign Concessions of China. In the Philippines students, school children and even tiny mites have paraded with banners bearing the slogan "Give me independence or give me death" Which smacks of precocious affectation when you remember Filipinos have been a conquered race for over three hundred years.

Perhaps you may think that his enforced cleanliness, his charming manners and his foreign moulding have actually elevated the Filipino to our Western standards, and that, when I found myself in his land, I was prejudiced. But under the veneer he is a living example of an East which is East and immutable.

In business he is more dilatory than either the Chinese or the Japanese. The most western thing in his country when I was there was his train service, which did not run at night because no Filipino could be trusted to stay awake then! Squeeze and graft had a great hold. In Public Health, since Filipinos took over responsibility, there was an immediate slipping back. No longer was it a crime to leave coconut shells lying about without turning them upside down. In the cups pools of water, forming, breed mosquitos; and malaria and dengue fever, when I visited the islands, were slowly regaining their old sway. The constitution appropriated less funds than of old to public welfare, and those which they did appropriate were not dealt with honestly.

That is the stumbling block which Orientals fail to hurdle in their haste to reach the glittering goal of equality with Western nations: integrity. Living happily and shallowly, our brown-skinned brethren are convinced that they can manage their country better than any white man ever did. Or perhaps they aren't really convinced; each is out for what he can make on the deal, but feels it expedient to cloak his real ambition in high-sounding words. Intellectually our equal, he claims self-government. The necessity and value of character in administration and social service escapes him: and character takes generations to form

Americans proved that an Oriental country could in forty years be brought up to the prosperity and health level of a Western state (as far as local conditions permitted), but Filipinos were proving that without stringent foreign supervision no Oriental race would maintain that level.

I contacted some old timers; what they said confirmed my own impressions. "The Filipino is irresponsible; not a good worker. All he thinks of is putting on his Sunday clothes and going to the cinema and gambling over cock-fights or in the national lottery. He is swayed like grass in the wind by meretricious eloquence. He goes on strike for the least possible reason. He's untruthful and unreliable. . . .

"Now the Wild Tribes make good workmen. They won't strike. Only, every now and then, they down tools for a day or so to go up into the mountains for a canao (native feast). They're truthful too. And strong. They're not afraid of dirtying their fingers like the Filipino."

Yet often the native Filipino had a charming kindness and ease of manner which made him easy to live with. He was devoted to his family, and the children rarely cried. While the States still had control it was the rule that English be spoken in school and on the way there and back. English, queer though it might be in phraseology, was the official language of the Philippines.

There were many Chinese and a growing number of Japs there, as well as a dwindling stock of Spanish families. And though the Filipino is of Malay origin, the name he bears is Spanish, since during the three hundred years of Spanish occupation 98 per cent of the population became devout Roman Catholics and were baptised. Names like Angel Guitierrez and Caridad Jesus

were common, though no single drop of Spanish blood flowed in the veins of their bearers.

Among themselves little notice was taken of the various shades of skin which nature had dealt to them; but those few pure-blood Spaniards who remain would rather intermarry with the Chinese than with Filipinos, because their skin is whiter. Many of the wealthiest families in the Islands, before the coming of Nippon's conquering hordes, were Spanish-Chinese.

The Wild Tribes, driven long ago into the mountains by successive waves of Malay immigration, are themselves Malay in origin, though their physique has been influenced by environment. The civilisation which swept over the plains of Luzon did not penetrate very forcefully into their mud and stone huts, and though they are said to have given up head hunting, most of them cling to their animistic religion, the beliefs and customs of their tribes.

Of these Wild Tribes, the Negritos are a pigmy and vanishing race, the Ifugaos derive fame from a series of enormous rice-terraces constructed in the misty past on the slopes of precipitous mountain country, and the Igorots used to mine gold in their inaccessible hills long before the coming of the white man.

Some of them were still working as miners, under organised supervision, in some of the richest gold mines in the world. You might, indeed, call them partially civilised, since on pay day they piled into battered Ford cars and proceeded to spend their money as fast and with as much éclat as possible. To see an Igorot tricked out in what he considered the height of American fashion was to get an eyeful.

I have seen Igorots in violent-coloured plus fours, with checked golf stockings (a very loud check) canvas and rubber baseball boots, a vivid striped shirt, a flowing tie of some appalling hue, and a stetson hat. The effect might be varied by the Igorot's rooted objection to wearing anything on his feet.

Because of their honesty and strength, compared with the soft-eyed Filipino, Igorots used to make good policemen. In their native villages these officials had to wear their badges on their gee-strings, as it was their sole garment. Their morals, though peculiar, were rigid. Missionary influence had not succeeded in eradicating the olag or trial-marriage house. Here dwell all the young maidens, and are visited nightly by their swains. A girl who becomes pregnant is eligible for marriage with the father of her child. Should there be a dispute over the paternity, it is settled by a kind of harmless witchcraft. The girl, by the way, is under no obligation to marry; children are greatly desired under any circumstances.

The new hut for bride and groom is constructed by the whole village. When you think it over, the olag system has the merit of preserving the race, since childless marriage is eliminated.

I cannot help imagining, as I write, that the Wild Tribes will prove tough guerrilla opponents to the Japs, especially if these indulge in their usual orgies of rape. . . . Indeed, it amuses me to think that the Igorots will revert, in their revenge, a few years back into barbarism, and head-hunting will again become a serious occupation whereby the young buck proves his valour. I doubt whether any American or Filipino tears will be shed if, after this war ends, a choice collection of Japanese heads is found among the mountain fastnesses of Luzon. . . .

When the Igorot does not dress up in imitation of the white man for his ventures into town, he wears a shirt flowing loose, and is then convinced that he is decorously clad. Hat and shirt; surely these are sufficient concessions to decency when a fellow is used only to a gee-string? I stared the first time I saw a group of these men; they looked as though they had forgotten their pants.

Oddly enough, like all Eastern races, the menfolk cover their heads from the sun, while the women do not. Filipinas often carry sunshades, but they don't make the mistake of trying to wear headgear. The lower class Filipina, carrying produce, balances it on her head, there, too, she places a closed umbrella or sunshade when she has no further need to use it.

What the Filipina carries, however, is eclipsed by the feats of her savage cousins. Igorot males leave matters of trade to their wives, so it was the woman who used to come trailing into Baguio, barefoot, with a heavy load of charcoal, sweet potatoes, bananas or some such produce. Some she carried in a peculiarly shaped basket on her back, with a coloured woven thong to pass round her forehead for support, so as to have both hands free. On top of this, balanced chiefly on her head, she might carry two full-sized sacks of charcoal. A woman with such a load might cover twenty-five miles of mountain trail, with a child balanced on one hip, sell her produce in the special Igorot market, buy household requirements, and go back the same afternoon.

The Filipinos adopted a lofty attitude towards these pagan tribes. But to me part of their fascination was that, thanks to these "wild people," one could trace the process of evolution of the Filipinos themselves. They, too, had once been pagan savages. Now civilisation had touched them . . . and, comparing the two, I wondered to what end. They had gained in social graces, that was all. *Cui bono?*

When I think of Japanese domination over those islands, I recall that not only the Wild Tribes had a record as warriors. Forty years ago, when the States took the islands from Spain, Filipino resistance was stout. In Shanghai too the Filipinos I knew were particularly good sportsmen. I reckon there will be a few Jap headaches before the Philippines can be said to be completely subdued.

## CHAPTER X

### KULANGSU: THE VILLAGE OF WONG KA LOONG

It was during the 1,162 miles journey to the Philippines that I first set eyes on the little island International Settlement of Kulangsu. To me it was especially interesting because it was the only other international piece of territory that I knew of in the world outside Shanghai except Tangier.

On the map the Isle of Sounding Waters is a tiny dot scarcely distinguishable from Amoy. In reality there are, opposite the mouth of the Pei Chi or Dragon River, two humped islands, half a mile from the mainland and from each other. Kulangsu, an idyllically peaceful community in these days, of one and a half square miles, and Amoy, abomination of desolation in the wake of Japanese capture.

We anchored in a channel between the two. Over Amoy flew a tattered Japanese flag; her stone stores with deep verandahs facing out to sea had gaping holes and tilting roofs. Her foreshore was deserted except for a few squat khaki figures piling into a shabby shark boat, and in the dust of her empty square a platoon of infantry tried to give an impression of busy occupation to a dead land.

On Kulangsu, however, pretty greenclad refuge with its tiny rambling lanes and its air of timeless leisure, all was peace. Its widest thoroughfares, neatly asphalted, were ten feet in breadth at most; down the clean gutters ran rills of fresh water. Neither car nor cart nor rickshaw nor bicycle might ply there. No wonder the paths were smooth and unworn, no wonder faces wrinkled

slowly and friends cast up by the tide of fortune from busy Shanghai on the shores of Kulangsu professed themselves content.

What pleasure to saunter along well in the middle of the path, with no grunt of sweating rickshaw coolie to make us jump aside, no shrill bicycle bell, no clatter of hoofs. If one was invited out at night, one walked; the distance couldn't be more than half a mile at most. Invalids could hire a "carry-chair" ordered well in advance from some tradesman who plied some other trade and kept a "chair" as a side line.

The two hundred and fifty foreigners formed a friendly little community and passed their time playing cards and tennis, visiting each other's porticoed houses set back in gardens tangled with bougainvillea and flame o' the forest trees; or they went swimming on miniature white-sand beaches edging the three miles of coastline, ignoring as best they might the Japanese destroyer anchored watchfully out in the roads.

The Isle of Sounding Waters had a ringside seat at the sanguinary battle for Amoy Island. Shots from the contest spattered its waterfront and Chinese soldiers trying to swim the half-mile to safety were mostly annihilated in the act. Those who made it discarded their uniforms and mingled with the island's civilian refugees and were absorbed, while Amoy turned to dust and ashes in the conquerors' hands.

Trade, which had made the place, forsook it with its population and with its entire severance from the unconquered mainland, where vigilant troops foiled the enemy's constant landing attempts. To the abandoned shell of a once prosperous place came flocking Formosans in their hundreds, took possession of the deserted stores and ruined homes like a swarm of locusts. But it availed them little for there was no trade. Only the Japanese marines were there to constitute their customers; with the looming mainland as a constant menace.

There may have been—there certainly was—smuggling between the mainland and friendly Kulangsu; some of these goods eventually must have found their way into the holds of foreign ships which now anchored closer to the international island and shipped supplies from there only.

It was a far cry from this modern tale to the old history of Kulangsu, when Koxinga, the famous pirate, made it his headquarters and kept there a fleet of 8,000 junks and an army of 300,000 men, proclaiming himself leader of all pirates along the coast. There is also a ruthless page of British history—not so far back, either—connected with Amoy and Kulangsu, which we bombarded against heroic resistance, seized and "punished" in revenge for Chinese contrariness in quite a different quarter.

Later, when peace was made, Amoy was thrown open as a treaty port to foreign trade, and through inadvertence the name of little Kulangsu was omitted from the pact; it did eventually become an international settlement in miniature.

To anticipate a little, I will now get on to 1939, when The Isle of Sounding Waters again slipped into the news. By then Japan was openly claiming to blockade the whole coast of Cathay. Kulangsu, she stated, was a stumbling block, because it was still trading with China, via the mainland. Kulangsu pleaded that vegetables, fruit and rice were legitimate imports as food for her population. Japan, adamant, announced a blockade of Kulangsu, and landed marines. (Every Power concerned had the right to land military personnel in an International Settlement.) To the surprise of Japan, and it must be admitted, ourselves in Shanghai, America and Britain immediately landed each precisely as many marines as had Nippon. This effectively blocked any idea Japan may have had at the time of seizing the place. We who realised

that action in Kulangsu might foreshadow action in Shanghai, breathed more freely at this than we had for many moons.

Shanghai, Kulangsu, Tangier: the world's three International zones; all gone now; swallowed up by greed and lust for domination. Yet two of them at least were places where nations rubbed shoulders happily on a footing of equality, with never a whisper of racial friction until one nation began to put itself above the rest. . . .

We called at Hongkong, too, on our way up and down the coast; and while we were anchored out in the roads I gazed, fascinated, at the magnificent, landlocked harbour, where great liners and rusty tramps, sampans and junks and fishing smacks sped across sheltered water and came to rest.

The unwieldy-looking junks, manipulated by great sweeps balanced on a tiny metal pin, and propelled by bat's-wing sails, seemed to carry back to the dark ages of history. In the poop gay plants flowered, laundry fluttered. The crew lives, loves and dies aboard.

Early morning. A cock crows from some unseen roost aboard a vessel; geraniums enlivening the drab woodwork catch the first rays of dawn. An old, old junk, black all over and seemingly deserted, her skeleton sails stark against the morning sun's silver, moves slowly and undeviating as a ghost athwart the path of other more animated craft. From the deck of a cargo junk a small boy gaily releases his home-made kite. A knot of ginger kittens select a nook in the increasing warmth. Between wooden planks of a packing-case stove come the flare of fire, smoke, and a savoury smell.

A woman and a girl lug fresh water in kerosene tins on a bamboo pole over uneven piles of merchandise without spilling a drop. An old hag, squatting, sets out in a cleared place ten bowls of food for her little family circle. Past the jumble of lighters clustering about us sweeps a swifter vessel, the woman leaning with all her strength on the giant oar, while on her back there sways with her a three-year-old child in a sling. Women everywhere, tugging, lifting, hauling, letting down the great ribbed sails, steering, mending or washing.

Junks awaiting their turn in serried ranks alongside our great hulk were unceremoniously used by aliens as a gangway. While each lighter unloaded, those of its occupants who were idle (mostly the superior males) roamed about our Tjinegara, observing with sharply humorous eyes, commenting without reserve, stealing rarely, cheerful sea-gipsies, quite unawed by our manifest superiority!

Day waned: grey clouds edged with gold heaped themselves up behind the hilly circle around us in simulation of yet more hills; and a sampan with ragged sails, thin as cobweb, trod the molten path of sunset like a huge dark bat. A small girl, weary, dropped asleep on a pile of sacks in the well of her craft: mothers fed their babes and laid them away in odd corners. Solitary lanterns gave out sepulchral light: wizened creatures on our decks dozed intermittently between bales whose loading they were supervising.

The sweeping circle of dark blue hills closing us in pricked with lights, until strung with intricate tracery, like a beautiful woman proudly able to wear excess of jewellery. The famous Peak rose high above us, festooned with magic fireflies. All night, while our silent electric cranes worked, women called piercingly in the sing-song Cantonese dialect, with its upward lilt at sentence end; and from oppressive cabins Europeans wandered out now and then, unable to sleep.

After being away in lovely, orderly islands where everything seemed assured and safe, the precariousness of tenure in Shanghai, its sordid overcrowding and its antagonisms flaring into gun battles and kidnapping struck me as especially harsh. I began to wonder, too, about a race worse situated than mine, unable to leave even if they wished—White Russians.

For twenty odd years these people without a country had contrived to scratch a living in China, from Dairen to Tsingtao, from Shanghai to Canton. They travelled under temporary Chinese passports, and if they had recourse to law it had to be Chinese law; they had no Consul to defend them in this alien land, no one to stand up for their rights. Practically the only white beggars I ever saw in China were Russian.

Many of them, of course, worked under Chinese. A young fellow I knew connected with a Riding School in Shanghai had been teaching Chinese recruits in the North the care, grooming, feeding and training of horses. At outbreak of war, stranded in Peking, he was arrested by Japanese and accused of being a spy. Under ordinary conditions this would have been the end of him.

But luckily for him, he had been accustomed to playing polo for a British team. When he didn't turn up for a match his fellow-players, officers of the British army, at once set inquiries afoot and managed to procure his release. With a little more unofficial aid he returned to Shanghai, and there the weakness of his standing as a White Russian smote him afresh.

He, like his compatriots, had suffered twenty years of self-imposed exile, hugging to himself the barren pride of being a White. Meanwhile Communism in Russia, against which he set himself, had modified itself into Socialism, and if he cared to register with the Red Consulate in Shanghai, citizenship of the U.S.S.R. would probably be awarded to him, and to thousands like him. Whereas the Chinese, under whose protection his temporary papers were made out, had become seifs to Japan. Would that mean, in the long run, that he too would be forcibly swept up by Nippon into her net?

"After all," said he, "Russia is my country. Some day, for sure, Japan will fight Russia. And I will never fight for the Japanese against my own people. . . . You know, Miss Munday, we Russians have a saying about ourselves, that we have 'only one skin.' You understand? Other people they have several; we have only one. In a political sense, it is meant. That we are more sensitive to political atmosphere than others, because we have suffered so much. And my skin tells me that sooner or later Russia and Japan must fight. Well, I will not be a Japanese slave, and I will not fight against Soviet Russia."

In early winter, 1938, the Japanese extended their conquest further south and Canton fell. Now came Hongkong's time to eat sorrow, and the proud Island of Fragrant Streams found herself hemmed in by predatory Japs, her traffic up the Pearl River blocked, likewise her communication with Free China, except precariously by an air route that was never safe because Japan shot down the planes when she could.

I am no strategist, but from that moment Hongkong, to my mind, was doomed. Gone was the very reason for her existence: trade. I could not even see what value could be attached to the rocky island militarily, since it obviously could not be relieved by either sea or land if attacked, and the airfields were over on Kowloon, on a little Dunkirk of their own.

And now China herself had only French Indo-China and Burmah and the U.S.S.R. as neutral powers through whom she could trade and from whom she could acquire in return munitions of war. Canton went with suspicious suddenness. Was it, as rumour whispered, sold out by rich merchants so that their houses and shops should not be damaged by bombardment? Cantonese have always been China's greatest business men: surely, with their backing, sturdy resistance could have been organised, so that the magnificent Pearl River remained open?

And now Hongkong, like Shanghai, had more wealthy Chinese refugees than ever, and the poor came drifting in later, carrying their children and their bundles. In both these cities, as in other parts of China, swarmed also a host



of "siao pize" or Wild Boys, homeless and living on their wits, separated by the upheaval from their parents, and never likely to find them again.

They snatched their living in the streets, robbing handcarts, barrows, pillaging garbage tins, stealing milk boxes for firewood from the walls against which they were affixed, and even wrenching iron sewage-covers from roadways, so that one might break a leg in the dark, stepping suddenly into the gaping hole left after their depredations.

One Russian woman was fined in our local court for organising a gang of thirty little siao pi ze into a most successful coal-snatching society. Armed with sacks tied round their middles, these urchins waited at some obstructed portion of a road for coal trucks to pass, and yanked lumps of coal out with a long hook; or gathered at the house where delivery was taking place, and stole while the lorry was stationary. (I once saw a ragamuffin throw himself down, howling, before the wheels in a narrow lane, and he did not desist until he had been given a huge lump weighing about thirty pounds!) Others led sallies into coal yards, or made holes in back fences and crawled in at night for coal. After paying her gang twenty cents each per day, about 1½d., the woman made a comfortable £3 per week on re-sale of coal.

Other lads, more intent on respectability, developed into miniature merchants at an age when English children would scarcely be out of the kindergarten. I passed a mud-walled squatter's hut one day; the woman had three children and a babe in arms. Only the babe was not working. The other three plaited straw into ropes with practised hands, talking and laughing together with the ease of experts, scarcely heeding calloused palms and deft, grubby fingers.

A little further down the road a boy of seven manipulated a lottery wheel, and pushed his customers aside with authoritative hand when he saw I was about to take his photograph.

All over our Outside Roads were springing up wooden factories, silk filatures, cotton dyeing and weaving mills, rubber works, etc. These were thrown together anyhow on land not under Council jurisdiction, and were death traps in case of fire. Awful smells used to come from some of them; well I remember a silk filature where the cocoons were festooned on a long fence to disintegrate in the open, and the frightful smell of dead fish which came from them. Almost as bad was the glue factory, where bones scraped or flesh, and horses' hoofs were boiled down into a gluey mass which was laid out to dry on frames. . . .

These pathetic factories were a testimony to Chinese resilience, though it was appalling to see the conditions under which they were run. Men and women lived and slept on the premises, in between bits of machinery, and children toddled about untended. Only twisting mud paths, beaten out by human feet, wove about a huddle of mud-floored, mud-walled huts, clustering close to wooden work shacks. Sanitation was a filthy hole in the ground with a ramshackle shelter rigged about it. The only water was a turgid, yellow flood which stank.

Completed work of any kind would be carried along those twisting paths to the paved road built by foreigners; and once on the road could be loaded into vans and driven away.

Such was the squatters' village of Wong Ka Loong. Its people, a little over a year back, had been refugees from the western country district so thoroughly bombed by Japan. Once inside our Defence perimeter they had found precarious livelihood on 125,000 square yards of No-Man's-Land territory between Municipal roads. Here roughly 800 shacks—not one of which had taken more than a week to build—had sprang up, and neither our police nor sanitary inspectors had jurisdiction over it, since the Japanese by right of

conquest considered it "Reformed Government Territory," while making no attempt to police or cleanse it. Like a festering sore between good-class stone residences built along the roads it mushroomed into existence.

Its inhabitants toiled without complaint; bought their water from shops along the road and carried it home on their shoulders. They were making a living, beginning again, and ere winter gripped the land harshly they would have contrived comparative comfort.

Then in a brief two hours the entire settlement was razed to the ground by an unidentified fire. Only ten lives were lost, an amazing record attributable to the fact that no shack was more than one storey high. Some domestic animals were burnt, and among the debris were found later half a dozen charred coffins, containing bodies awaiting a favourable opportunity of burial on ancestral land.

And from among all that crowd of 3,000 people suddenly bereft for the second time, only about five groups of keening women and children could be seen. Seven fire engines, summoned from our Settlement and from Frenchtown struggled to find some passage which would at least admit them to the vicinity; ultimately running hoses 900 feet long which straggled across two principal Settlement roads and held up all traffic thereon.

Meanwhile the 3,000 dispossessed stood and watched the scenic fire in almost complete silence. No sooner had it died to smouldering ashes than they surged forward to search, each in the spot where his hut had once stood, for anything which might remain.

I wandered along two days later. While one odd corner still smouldered a brand new bamboo fence was being built again around the exact dimensions of the burnt-out cotton factory, and on nearly every square of blackened land once occupied the previous tenants had again taken possession.

Charitable societies had been at work and presented the destitute families with a couple of woven straw mats apiece and some bamboo poles and lashings. Under these straw mats, folded over tunnel-like, or in the shape of a tent, sat mothers with babies, while cooking-pots smoked in the winter sunshine, and men, women and young boys toiled to lash together poles which would be the nucleus of another home.

It was this fire at Wong Ka Loong that gave me furiously to think there lies obviously a tremendous power in sovereignty over such a dogged, persistent race. Whoever controlled them and their infinite gift for labour controlled a force which could be exploited on one side or the other to help win the war. In the beginning I had been astounded to see the Kuomintang actually busying itself over removal of the refugee population to the Interior; financing and equipping them. In all the thousands of previous years during which famine and flood had overtaken the humble peasantry of China no Chinese Government without outside help had ever satisfactorily bestirred itself on their behalf.

Now I realised that Chiang Kai Shek's charitable forethought had an oblique inspiration. To wring from the rich soil its crops and from factories their products Japan had to have her heel on the necks of countless underlings. The over-population at home of which Japanese apologists make so much is in no sense over-population of country districts. The Japanese gravitates to city life, as do we all.

It would therefore prove next to impossible (as it had already proved extremely difficult in the case of Manchuria) to persuade large numbers of Japanese citizens, looking for relief and emergence after the war, to accept humble settlement upon fallow land as a reward. To an amazing degree, therefore, Japan's recoupment depended upon the return to devastated areas of peasants and factory workers.

China's gamble then, of trading space for time, was played with human pawns. Japanese pursuit of her straggling army was reckoned to cost twice more than its tactical retreat; and—alas, poor China!—she could afford to lose millions of men without running short. But still the balance could ultimately be swayed by that great mass of humanity, Chinese coolies, without whose labour adequate and profitable exploitation would be impossible.

And I could not see that the Kuomintang was really tackling this problem systematically. For so many aeons China had been ruled by her wealthy merchants and landlords; these preponderated in the Government personnel; even the Red Army against which for many years Chiang was leading his own troops in an internal strife, and which now fought valiantly for home and country, was still in disfavour.

With good cause: if you take the point of view of a wealthy absentee landlord. Whatever country the Reds had made their stamping ground had immediately been divided up among the peasants who lived upon it and tilled its soil. Suddenly finding themselves free from a heavy burden of debt, the peasants ranged themselves solidly behind this liberating army which had made them owners instead of serfs. For this reason, although as a result of its years of experience the Red Army excelled in guerrilla tactics, it was only tolerated by the government and many limitations were imposed upon it. Because explosives and ammunition were not generously dealt out to it, raids upon the enemy proved a simpler means of replenishment. Its pay from governmental coffers was meagre.

But it had allied itself with the common people, and if these were alienated or dispossessed not only would the Reds their allies prove a powerful revolutionary force, but those alienated could throw their might behind the Japanese invaders.

What worried me more and more as time went on was to see that thousands of humble workers did in the end return to Hongkew and Yangtzepoo and labour there. Rewi Alley's Indusco had evidently only partially succeeded. I knew it had been largely financed by overseas Chinese and foreigners. The wealthy refugee merchants who had flocked to Hongkong and Shanghai had deposited as much of their wealth abroad as they could, in American and British banks; and as far as I knew there was no legislation in China to force them to contribute one penny to the exchequer of their own country.

I wondered, in fact, as Japan progressively blockaded the coast and later when she moved into French Indo-China, what revenues, if any, were left to the Kuomintang? Customs, Posts, Telegraphs, Salt Gabelle, port dues, were in alien hands. There is no Income Tax in China. Indeed the humble shopkeeper paid nothing for the war. General Chiang Kai Shek, advised by T. V. Soong, had secured his credits abroad at the outset, but these would in the end become exhausted.

In the first two years of Japan's aggression, indeed, it appeared obvious that Great Britain had embarked upon an appeasement policy towards the aggressor, which would enable her to treat with a victorious Japan on friendly terms. It had not then become obvious that Japan intended to clear the white man out of the Far East altogether, and that China was only a stepping-stone, a practice ground whereon she tried out her troops, used up her old munitions and equipment, bluffing us that these antiquated tanks and guns gave a measure of her actual military power.

China presents a problem as difficult as that of India, where the numbers involved are somewhat similar. After the war, presuming that we drive Japan into her own islands once again, what is to happen to our Ally, who will have conquered chiefly through our aid? Is she to be allowed to fall back into feudal ways, with a renewal of the old internecine warfare? And rich landlords

rise up again (being at the moment mostly in the hands of Japan I presume they have been mulcted of what wealth they had on hand) and corrupt officials profiting from every transaction to which they lay their hands?

On the other side of the ledger will be the Communist districts which have come under Red Army protection. Any attempt made to liquidate the troops or redistribute the land will lead to bloodshed. And, on top of these internal complications, the Allies will expect their old trading rights again; and, though extra-territoriality is abrogated, they will insist upon adequate policing and protection of their nationals and freedom to move about the country.

But give all Asiatic nations freedom of access to all raw materials and in a few years the yellow race, being numerically overwhelming and living for such infinitesimal cost, will undersell every white manufacturer in the world.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE WANDERING JEWS REACH SHANGHAI: CEYLON INTERLUDE

SHANGHAI had become, in spite of its discomfort, a sanctuary for Hitler's rejects, the Jews. On Italian express steamers they came but without being allowed to land at the various ports along the way, Suez, Aden, Colombo, Singapore. For if they landed, they disappeared: were swallowed up into the milling eastern crowds, only to blossom forth later, by the means of underworld finance, into small traders who had unaccountably lost their passports!

But Shanghai, half-way across the world, was a passport-free port: open to jailbirds, honest men, Jews and Gentiles. Even over those who landed in Hongkew from her own ships Japan appeared to exercise no restrictions at all. Cabaret owners, geisha girls, yoshiwara pimps, dope peddlers, and hooligans trailed like ghouls in the wake of Nippon's army, in the avowed intention of turning many a dishonest penny in transactions with foreigners, Chinese, or their own people.

One foreign wharf alone flourished amid those usurped by Japan in Yangtzepoo, Messrs. Butterfield and Swire's "Shanghai Hongkew Wharf," and it had only survived because all through those seventy-five grim days a handful of employees had sat tight and refused to leave. In consequence Japan could not take possession. Here docked the white and gold *Conte Verde*, by which Mussolini's Savoy Grenadiers were to leave us; and from her landed a pitiful band of Jews, carrying hand-luggage, since their heavy goods, detained at the German frontier to be examined for possible currency smuggling, were to follow later.

At first we were astounded to find so many of them dressed in the height of European fashion, and in the most expensive materials; but they explained that those who had not been in concentration camps had been allowed to buy as many clothes in Germany as they wished before leaving, though they were not allowed to take out money to the value of more than nine pounds wherewith to face a new life!

Thus Shanghai had to grow accustomed to a new race; unable to speak or understand a single word of English, the lingua franca of the East, poor as the proverbial church mouse, flaunting garments with the exaggerated stamp of Berlin or Vienna upon them; thin, pointed male footgear, amazing checked pants, broad padded shoulders and wasp waists!

You might have thought Shanghai had exhausted its capacity for charity on behalf of the destitute Chinese still in our midst. But ever since our first

influx of eighty Jewish physicians in Spring, 1934, we had had committees organised for their aid. They arrived always by Italian or German lines because these alone accepted their registered marks. One of the committees was the Shanghai Zionist body, another the Salvation Army, which did invaluable work throughout the Far East helping all refugees, irrespective of nationality, creed or politics.

Each needy immigrant was granted Mex.\$60 per month as a living allowance (£2) and for those utterly down and out, large deserted mansions were rented, or Sir Phillip Sassoon gave various portions of his own Hongkew property on loan, for their use. In that battle-scarred area rents were cheap; holes made by shells and grenades had been patched up, and about fifty humans accommodated in each house.

Consider that a census taken not long before on the number of Chinese inhabiting each house in Shanghai established the terrific average total of fifty-three souls per tiny dwelling, and you have a small conception of the overcrowding which had so inexorably contributed to epidemics of cholera, typhus and smallpox.

I remember an anonymous donor of Mex. \$50 for the benefit of our Jewish refugees signed himself "A German." Which showed that a kindly heart still beat in German breasts when individuals were allowed to think for themselves.

Gradually the number of Jewish refugees in Shanghai rose to two thousand. Armed with suitcases of shoddy material made in Japan, they invaded offices, houses and flats until Chinese servants had to learn something they had never learnt before; to turn white men and women away from our doors. They lied, of course, to try and sell their wares; and we sooner or later discovered the lie and would have no more truck with them. Not that we intended harm to the refugees; but our boycott of Japanese goods stood firmer than ever. If they wanted to make their way among us it would have to be by other means.

A week before Christmas a local radio station sent out an appeal asking that Shanghaianders offer temporary homes to a hundred German and Austrian refugee children arriving with their parents on the *Conte Biancamano*. We responded as best we could, hastily adapting disused attics and bedrooms, borrowing from each other bedding and spare furniture. By midday, on 23rd December, Rita, aged twelve, selected as my protégée by the committee, was in my keeping. She was a pretty little thing, with fair curly hair, beautiful big grey eyes and a sensitive, self-willed face. How self-willed she was I would find out later. "Tante" (Auntie) and Rita at once proceeded to Christmas shopping, and as we entered a great store we were accosted by a Father Christmas whose Chinese slant eyes were so well disguised under bushy white eyebrows that Rita never realised his nationality.

He asked her name in English. I said hastily "She doesn't understand. She doesn't speak English." "Oh," said the Chinese accommodatingly, "what does she speak?" "German." Immediately he held out his hand and greeted her in her native language, giving her a balloon.

As we turned away, I reflected once more on the cosmopolitanism of our city, where a Chinese hired at 1s. per day to act as Santa Claus is able to play his part in several languages without turning a hair and without considering the performance worthy of special credit.

Thus Rita entered my small household and turned it upside down. She watched with interested eyes the gaily wrapped and ribboned parcels that arrived, never guessing that, thanks to my warm-hearted friends, nearly half of them were for her, under such designations as "Miss Munday's little guest" or "the little refugee." These I hid, and on Christmas Day, when her parents came to lunch (and stayed nearly all night!) she found them at her place, and nearby the little bicycle I had bought her.

Later we went into the park. "Are you sure we may go in?" they asked. "May we sit on the seats? In Germany Jews would not be allowed. . . . The Committee here is going to send the children to school that they may learn English. . . . We are a little afraid, because of the race fights."

I don't think they quite believed me when I said we didn't have race fights in Shanghai!

A little later, however, Papa questioned me about my own nationality and creed. Finally his face smoothed out. I, an Englishwoman with no Jewish blood, had offered a home to his little Jewish daughter until such time as he and his wife could earn a living once again. Shanghai must, after all, be a little different.

I enjoyed that Christmas. Rita and I went to many parties, where special little attentions were paid to her; she was outfitted with clothes—and my friends helped there too—but she frequently disgraced herself by manifesting an almost unnatural determination to have her own way. Naturally, our refugee guests frequently visited each other; but whenever things did not go as Rita wished, she would throw herself on the bed or floor and scream and kick.

Finally, Christmas holidays came to an end. Rita's parents had found work, and I entered her as pupil in the Jewish school. But although she went there the first day with extreme docility when I myself took her, on the second morning, when I sent her off in the care of an "amah," she staged a fit of obstreperousness on the pavement outside my flat and refused to get into the bus. Tante, she decreed, was to take her to school; nobody else.

Tante, unfortunately, had to go to work herself. . . . So Rita's sojourn with me ended, and she was returned to her parents, who had already located a distant relative in Shanghai willing to take the child.

Gradually, during 1939, British and American views of Japan's aggression in China seemed to be changing. There was some slight stiffening of their attitude, though not enough to stay the drop in foreign prestige which we had felt in a variety of ways. Loans were made to China; but they were of a size to suggest that the real intention back of them was to keep China going another year or so till we could see which way the cat would jump in Europe. Foreign firms in Shanghai began to calculate more seriously which of two losses they could with advantage face; that of hanging on, functioning at a loss, until a possible future turn of the tide (this, interpreted, meant foreign intervention, without which the tide could never turn): or cutting their losses and getting out while the going was good.

Meanwhile, a serious situation was gradually developing in our "Outside Roads" district. Since Japan claimed jurisdiction over all territory previously owned and policed by China, its puppet "Ta Tao" officials nominally controlled all the enclaves between our extra-Settlement roads. Already, as will be remembered, a suggested agreement with the Chinese on this subject had been blocked by the two Japs on the Council; their reasons were being made plain. Our police had the right only to patrol the actual roads; any criminal being pursued had merely to step aside into a field, or turn down an alleyway to escape into Ta Tao territory unpoliced at night, and in daytime sparsely patrolled by puppets armed with batons.

To this once attractive residential western district moved most of the thugs, gaming-house and opium-den proprietors of Shanghai's underworld. Their "businesses" were sponsored by Japanese, who levied an impressive "protection fee" for allowing them to function.

When gambling ran high and money low, a gang of gunmen would sally forth to replenish empty pockets by means of highway robbery along our Municipal roads. Ta Taos in the meantime started sallying into our roads and attempting to usurp the functions of our police there, even stopping cars

and searching them. Gradually they had been equipped with rifles, and the possession of these gave them confidence.

One night a group of socialites halted their cars in obedience to what they believed was a Ta Tao search party. Only when the gangsters proceeded to strip them of watches and rings did the truth dawn, too late for resistance. One or two owner-drivers, quicker-witted than the rest, and seeing in the dark no police uniform among the search party, refused to stop and drove unscathed through the ambush. All were convinced, however, that the perpetrators were Ta Tao men who had temporarily discarded their uniforms.

At first, in an attempt to prevent easy escapes into Ta Tao territory, our own police began to erect knife-rest barricades across many of the alley mouths debouching into Municipal roads. But this only brought the unequal struggle to a head. From that time onwards systematic raids were made on our patrols, relieving them of their pistols, until finally it became impossible for them to police the Outside Roads at all.

A good example of the kind of things which flourished under such conditions was the conversion of a large mansion almost opposite my flat into a Russian cabaret, with a miniature circus and side-shows in the garden edging the road. I watched the lofty trapeze go up and the glaring lights, amidst a cluster of residential houses, and finally one night at 8.30 blared out the mechanical music of a callopie, and thousands of Chinese crowded the road to see the show free of charge. No requests or demands by our police prevailed: the hideous cacophony was brazened out in the gratefully cooling air of a June night, when every window should be wide open, with just enough occasional pauses to hold out a vain hope of sleep to the sufferers in fifty houses round about. It did not stop until four next morning.

The acrobats performed thrice during the hours of darkness, the last performance being at three-thirty. Cars and buses, unable to force their way through the tireless throng of Chinese, honked despairingly, to no avail. I endured for a week, but had in the end to ask the hospitality of a friend for sleeping purposes. The unholy din went on until I left for summer holidays at the end of June, but some time in July one of the principal performers electrocuted himself on an overhead wire, and the circus petered out.

Harassments of this kind forced those who had decided to "see it through" in Shanghai to seek some quiet piece of land whereon to build, in spite of the uncertainty of tenure. Within Settlement limits the thing was impossible, every inch being taken up. Factories, workshops, squatters' straw-roofed mud-huts, wealthy Chinese refugees turning night into day; all huddled together, unwilling but helpless messmates, until some final event, relief or catastrophe, contrived to sort them all out.

An interesting sidelight upon conditions of rich Chinese living in Great Way (Ta Tao) territory was cast by a friend who said: "Strangely enough, it's not the Chinese lawful Government officials' relatives who are unsafe living in this Japanese-controlled area, it is the greater Ta Tao officials themselves, because the Chinese Patriotic Corps has vowed to exterminate them.

"We had one living in the house next to us. He had guards posted everywhere; his whole house was barricaded. He had two cars and you never knew which one he was to be in. Yet in a couple of months we heard the clanging of gongs and chanting of bonzes, and knew that he was dead.

"He'd been taking medicine, and one day, after taking a dose, he fell dead. As simple as that. Of course the Japs came and investigated, but after all, they'd had to mark up another failure, since the man, an official appointed by themselves, was dead.

"Now a wealthy Chinese family connected with the Kuomintang lives in that same house, and it is open; only one watchman. They move freely about.

Yet they, one would have thought, should be unsafe, living on enemy-controlled land. Of course, they have presumably paid the requisite 'protection tax' to the Great Way crowd."

Another of my friends, in an effort to escape the noise and dirt, leased land in Hungjao, the country west of our perimeter, loosely held by Japanese, and, because it offered no wealth to pillage, comparatively free of bandits, and prepared to build a small bungalow there. Moses Chong, her builder, went out with a pass through Japanese lines and contracted to begin her little place at once. But there was delay, and finally a piteous letter from Chong.

When he had gone out he had been confronted by a Chinese bully named Lee who, having presumably paid squeeze to the Japs, held an unwritten monopoly of all building in that area. So Moses tried to compromise, offering to buy his bricks from Lee, who must, however, supply the best in order to carry out Moses Chong's contract with his foreign employer.

Lee agreed, and dumped a load of bricks upon the site. Chong went out and found a lot of broken rubble, stolen from buildings destroyed in the hostilities. He had the temerity to point out this breach of contract to Lee, whereupon he was set upon, beaten up, and finally shot at by a gang of hooligans, obviously in the bully's pay.

So Moses Chong, a bullet mark across one cheek as a reminder, had to turn down his contract. Months later, the situation as regarded fresh building in Hungjao became worse. Germans with houses half-built were prevented from adding to them; gardens were trampled and looted; telephone posts were constantly being cut down and the service disrupted.

While all this pressure was being exerted in an indirect way, demands were made upon our City Fathers that they should suppress all anti-Japanese news within the Settlement, and certain of our local newsmen and radio commentators were receiving threatening messages and had the honour to figure on a Japanese roll of death. One of the radio stations, and one newspaper, turned their coats, but the remainder stood firm.

It was about this time that a beloved local commentator, an American with a deep, resounding voice, named Carroll Alcott, came over very heartily into the British camp (owing chiefly, some say, to the intervention of Sir Archibald Clark Kerr) and soon all Shanghai, French, English, German, Chinese, turned religiously to his station whenever the news and commentary came through. His wisc-cracks echoed and re-echoed in our conversation; his robust jokes, his naughty stories, the schoolboy relish with which he concluded each session with one of his inimitable: "And so it is with the thought—" . . . Carroll's "thoughts" would keep us chuckling most of the afternoon.

I don't know whether he wrote all his own stuff; I don't really care. He was the ideal person to put it across. "Rome-Berlin-Tokio hokey-pokey O Axis" was one crack I remember. Perhaps it is true that Britain could not at the time afford to give Shanghai anything but propaganda. If so, at least its exponent was the best ever.

Tokio fumed. His life was threatened, attempted. He kept two tough Russian bodyguards, and told us in his rollicking way over the air that he was used to Chicago, and always went "well heeled." One of our pupils went to work in the office next to his. She was sent in to his room and there on the table within easy reach of his big hand lay a pistol. If we failed to hear his voice when we tuned in we would all worry until he boomed out at us again much amused by premature reports of his death.

It must have been a rotten life he had to lead; hemmed in, stalked, always on the alert, never able to relax entirely, always suspecting a trap. . . . I am glad to say he got away before the end, on the plea of "taking a much needed



holiday." I am willing to bet he was got out by Intelligence and allocated to some other realm where his talents were made good use of.

In spite of our determination to boycott Japanese goods these came seeping into our Settlement in increasing quantities. Chinese probably had to accept them in order to get their other merchandise through Japanese obstructionism. I remember hesitating once in Sun Sun's between two materials; one had the name of a well-known English firm on the selvedge, the other, very pretty, did not proclaim its origin. The salesman, I noticed, tried quietly to influence me in favour of the English fabric, without in any way condemning its rival. This roused my curiosity "Is the other Japanese?" I asked. He would not reply. Finally, when I repeated "It is Japanese, isn't it?" he replied, hastily. "Also imported material, Madam." Then he picked up the English stuff and draped it persuasively over his hand. With the very slightest amount of emphasis he said, smoothly, "This material is guaranteed fadeless, Madam, and washes well."

He had answered my question, and we both knew it, but he had not violated his firm's instructions, which must have been to keep dark the origin of any Japanese material.

Not long before I left for my holidays there occurred the incident in which Dr. Lillie lost his life. Knowing the doctor to have been a strong-willed man exceedingly anti-Japanese, someone later described the affair as "what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable post." It appeared that the doctor was driving his own car across the bridge, past Japanese sentries into Yangtzepoo, with his wife and a Municipal policeman, Sergeant Wimsett, in the back. Before assessing the rights and wrongs of the occurrence remember that he was driving on a Settlement road over which the Japs had actually no legal rights.

It appears that his car slightly displaced a barbed-wire stand by the side of the road just after he had passed the sentry, and the latter signalled him to stop. He didn't, or wouldn't, so one of the Japs leaped on to his running board. From that moment the car followed a wildly-zigzagging course until it was smashed into broadside by a bus. Lillie and the Jap were killed; Mrs. Lillie and Wimsett knocked unconscious.

The two patients were carried into the General Hospital near by, but a Japanese officer who had witnessed the accident forced his way in and peremptorily demanded to be allowed to see and question the two unconscious foreigners. He strode into the operating theatre where Wimsett was already being operated upon. The patient had to be spirited away to the top floor where broken ribs and a compound fracture of the leg, together with facial injuries, had to be patched up in secrecy behind locked doors.

Furious at having his demands opposed by some French nursing sisters and the two British doctors and an Assistant Commissioner of Police, the Japanese let fly and slapped the police officer in full view of many witnesses. A machine-gun and fixed bayonets were in evidence all the while.

I remember well how smart our newspapermen were over this outrage. They had to get all their information from the mouth of the Domei spokesman, and they had grown crafty in working him into a corner from which he could not verbally extricate himself without making some damaging admission. Silence, of course, was equally damaging.

One of our Correspondents, an American, while questioning the Domei representative, elicited the information (which, as a matter of fact, he already had from witnesses) that the Nipponese authorities had taken possession of Lillie's car and had not allowed access to it by others. He yelled, "And did your police take the finger-prints on the steering-wheel?"

The question argued foreknowledge on the part of the questioner, and the spokesman would commit himself whichever way he answered. If he replied "yes" our correspondent would follow up by asking, as he ultimately did (thus getting his version into the news, since whatever transpired at these interviews could be published). "And is it a fact that two sets were found, one Dr. Lillie's and one those of the sentry, who was thus responsible for the accident, in that he seized the steering-wheel and pulled at it?" On the other hand, if the spokesman replied no, fingerprints had not been taken, he would be asked "what the hell sort of cops they thought THEY were, anyway?" He finally answered that he didn't know, but the American had by then contrived to get his version into the news so that we would all read the story aright.

That June the temperature in Shanghai was 99° in the shade night and day with excessive humidity. My last week before going away was hectic, and oddly enough, because of a 74-year-old visitor, a lady on a world tour whom some misguided member of my family had told to look me up.

She was a marvel. Arriving at ten a.m., she demanded a whisky-soda. We then proceeded to a British chemist where in the midst of purchases she suddenly stabbed a finger at the white man serving her and said, "You'll have stamps, of course you will. All sorts of queer stamps in China. Do go, there's a good man, and get me some; nice ones, mind." With a twinkle in his eye he obeyed.

We shopped, Mrs. D. with rising enthusiasm as she realised how cheap the slump in local dollars had made the articles she was buying. Not that she did the commuting; oh! no! I'd told her that the local dollar was worth 6½d. but do you think the dear creature troubled her brain with figures? Not on your life; she left the calculations to me. I am notoriously weak in mental arithmetic, but did my best to perform prodigies on her behalf.

She left sun-glasses behind in one shop, parcels in another, and ultimately having known me as a small child, loaded them all on to me as the easiest way of keeping an eye on them! Luckily by then we had a taxi waiting where I could dump them from time to time.

When we reached my flat very late for lunch she refreshed herself with another whisky-soda, and in the afternoon wrote letters at my desk and incidentally pinched all the used stamps she found on my own private letters in the pigeon-holes.

For part of the next day I unloaded her on to an American whom she knew slightly, and when she returned she complained that their cocktail had been "very weak, especially for Americans." I took the hint and shook her up a real snorter before dinner, which won her approval, while the temperature suddenly came down with a terrific typhoon downpour outside.

Next day when I dragged myself to work, having got her safely off by the 8.30 tender with her belongings all packed by myself, my friends said I looked tired. Whereas I'll wager hers said she looked fresh as a daisy. . . .

It was just as well I had planned a good holiday after that. Perhaps the precariousness of our tenure induced me to visit Ceylon while yet I had the chance; just as the following summer I chose Korea. The Italian liners were the only ones fast enough to give me four clear weeks ashore, and Italy had not yet entered the war against us. So I went on the *Conte Biancamano*, and once more verified my former impressions formed in Italy and Capri; that Italians dislike the complacency and self-assertion of the German, but do appreciate English simplicity.

As for their opinion of the Japs, I was considerably amused at its forcibility. The ship's company one and all had had to suffer at the hands of Jap sentries

as much as we residents had, but being less used to it, and more fiery, their reaction was more violent.

"You cannot-a see dat I am Italiano?" demanded one of the ship's staff wrathfully as two sentries with drawn bayonets almost stuck them into his chest. But, of course, they understood not a word. "If I had-a not stopped quick, they would-a have kill' me," he concluded forcibly as he recounted his story, "and so stupid! They did-a not know the Italian flag; they could-a not spik the Italian or the English or the German language; they onlee laugh!"

About the only reference on board to the Abyssinian conquest was a much-advertised Addis Ababa cocktail, supposed to contain as its principal ingredient Abyssinian wine. Only the bar-tender told me with a cynical shrug that no good came out of Abyssinia, not even good wine, and that the only wine in the Addis Ababa cocktail came from Italy.

Strolling about I found myself studying a large notice on the wall, and when I had read to the end I wondered dimly how I had ever dared to take passage on a Lloyd Triestino ship. I learned among other things, for instance, that if, after departure, the voyage should be broken through unforeseen circumstances the company would not refund passage money and "the voyage will be considered as accomplished." Also the "Master may omit any port of call contemplated in the itinerary without such a fact entitling passengers to cancel their contract or lodge a claim for damages."

So that if, after Singapore, the Master decided to omit Colombo, I might find myself borne willy-nilly along the burning Red Sea coast to Aden or Suez, and I would not be entitled to lodge a complaint. Well, well, well. . . .

The voyage lasted twelve days, in spite of a call at Hongkong and another at Manila. The Island of Fragrant Streams still presented a clean, orderly appearance in contrast with Shanghai; Filipino officials seemed more dilatory than ever, and the spaciousness of Singapore struck me anew. There alongside wharves lay heaps of coal waiting for shipment, and no one stole a lump. Houses had no fireplaces or outside walls; sometimes a lattice-work screen, or reed-blinds against the sun, and each floor extended out beyond the pillared inner room into open verandahs whose balusters were topped with trailing plants.

In Singapore, in the good old days, you had no need to lock doors, for at early morning hours icemen and milkmen called in barefooted silence to leave their wares, and would have been grieved to find the way barred, for the Malay is an honest man. Or was, before he fell into the clutches of Japan. Singapore friends of mine asked their rickshaw coolie once to lend them a hand while they moved pieces of furniture. When it was done, the mistress handed him twenty cents. With a bow the coolie returned ten cents "change." "If I had run for this length of time instead of moving furniture," quoth he, "I should not have earned more than ten cents. Tuan must not pay too much."

Finally the great island of Ceylon, edged by golden beaches, off which cruised watchful sharks, while mountains humped themselves into fantastic shapes in the hinterland for which I was bound. As we neared port countless catamarans, deep narrow canoes with a single great outrigger and bellying triangular two-coloured sails, swept boldly out past us into the sunset.

Next day, not long after dawn, we took the road to the mountains, a seventy-mile drive through some of the most fascinating scenery in the world. The Isle of Spices, indeed, deserves to be better known by leisurely travellers. Roads are good; some are impassable in the monsoon season, then the news is relayed by radio and travellers alter their itinerary.

As we drove, narrow bullock-carts arched with matting drew aside while Cingalese in bright sarongs swung dusky feet out from the rear. Clattering buses filled with natives recklessly raced each other along the tortuous road,

and Tamils and Cingalese pedalled busily along in their bare feet, their knees turned out, their "cloth" tucked up.

Wooden shacks and one-storeyed bungalows overhung with tall, leaning palms and flamboyant trees alternated along the road-edge with narrow native shops, cluttered with cheap tinned goods, Japanese gewgaws and cotton. Everywhere casual, easy, indolent natives, with bundles on heads; bright turbans, the flash of gold slotted through feminine nostrils, the graceful draping of a sari from the folds of which peeped a dark child's face.

We passed through rubber plantations, each encircled trunk having half a coconut shell bound below its cicatrice to drain the latex; paddy-fields with lustily growing rice, copra estates worked by natives. Ceylon imported much of its rice in those days from more industrious lands growing a double crop, the Cingalese being too lazy to raise more than one.

Now and then we saw elephants working or on their way. These are the property of some merchant who hires them out for labour on a contract. As our road began to rise, it criss-crossed a rushing, broad river in which natives washed cattle, clothes and themselves. Rubber plantations gave way to tea, and among low, glossy-leaved tea bushes other trees stood tall and graceful, planted for emulsion of the soil and to afford their more precious brethren shade. Orderly along steep hillsides marched the neat, pruned clumps; pickers with baskets on their backs bent over their work. Tea is picked every ten days, only a couple of leaves and the tender bud being garnered at a time, for a fine quality picking. It was interesting to realise that those dwarfed clumps, if unpruned, would rise to three times a man's height.

Most of the tea pickers were Tamils, addicted to glaring colours; often tall and thin with deep-set, flashing eyes. This race originally imported from Southern India worked in all weathers, with more satisfactory results than the Cingalese.

As the river shrank in our journey upwards, we paused for a meal at a clean Government Rest House, and to a tune of rushing water and giant whispering trees we savoured our brief rest. Then as we went on the well-surfaced roads narrowed; a yellow-robed, shaven priest watched us in profound meditation as we purred by; an incredibly emaciated beggar exhibited stumps instead of feet; dogs, hens, bullocks or an escaped calf scattered as we honked. Monsoon rains, due to break, had held off all day to allow us a perfect drive.

We turned in at 4,200 feet up a twisting drive to a low, spacious planter's bungalow set in a delightful garden. . . . And at night, as I tucked in my mosquito net, I thrust down one foot under blankets to meet the warm comfort of a hot water bottle. Incongruous juxtaposition! An occasional tree frog called through the dead silence; so great was the stillness after Shanghai's racket and the plunge of the great liner, that fear gripped me lest I be unable to sleep. Even as the thought came it was obliterated by slumber.

Even in the rainy season I found those uplands of Ceylon beautiful, and thoroughly enjoyed my sojourn among the planters. Far apart as they estates must be from each other, separated by the enormous sweep of their estates, they are extremely hospitable. No longer did the manager ride, he drove; old-time stables had been converted into garages.

I went over tea factories, met "tea makers," educated natives or Eurasians wearing European dress, with a house and garden of their own separate from the "coolie lines" where the lower class workers lived. I heard all about the struggle going on now the Legislative Body is entirely native to oust the Tamil, owing to terrible unemployment and consequent destitution among the indolent Cingalese. "Our people are the true natives of Ceylon," they said, "and as there is not enough work for them, the island cannot support an alien population which usurps our labour."

On the face of it this argument is logical. But examine the situation closer, and you find that the Tamil is by no means an inferior; he came to the Island of Lanka over two thousand years ago as a conqueror; Ceylon's last four kings were Tamils. Also the Tamil has lived amicably with his neighbours, and by his industry has become the labourer favoured by tea planters. His circumstances, his quarters in the "lines" whose cleanliness and sanitation are supervised by his employers, the medical attention he and his family receive, schools for his children and in some cases a pension scheme for his old age, are far in advance of anything he can hope to attain if uprooted in arbitrary fashion and transplanted to India. So satisfied with his conditions is he that as soon as a son or daughter is old enough to start plucking, the child is sent along to Master's office to apply for a job.

Strange how in Ceylon, midway between the two war zones, a sense of insecurity threaded through the beauty and the peace. For feeling ran high over the new scheme, and India had begun to mutter threats of reprisal against Ceylon. Here, I thought, ready made to my hand, was an argument against allowing natives unfit for rule to legislate. Where would we all be if we had to undertake a giant "as you were" migration that extended back over two thousand years? Australians would have to leave Australia to a handful of aborigines, the Dutch would have to cram together within the confines of Holland . . . no, the idea was absurd.

How then are the Allied Nations going to implement after the war their promises to India, China, the Netherlands East Indies, the Philippines? I mentioned before that if these great peoples were at peace and had access to raw materials, the most industrious among them, viz., the Chinese and the Japs, would within a few years be underselling us in the world's markets. The only cynical way out would be to leave them to tear each other to pieces in internal strife; but that, of course, cannot be.

Well, well. . . . I leave it to those competent to judge. But it must cost them many a headache. An International Police System appears to be the only solution, with International Police Zones dotted here and there around the globe, and mighty aerodromes. Let us not think or act too small in this vital matter, a small zone can be overwhelmed in so short a time . . . as Hitler has demonstrated. Surely we will have had enough of bloodshed, of watching gallant bands of outnumbered defenders go down fighting because we held too short-sighted a view before? Hongkong, Bataan, Corregidor, Wake, Singapore, even after the slaughter in Europe should have warned us. It is a grim and bloody list.

The upland climate of Ceylon is very pleasant. I also found that the country had a beauty little marred by the glossy tea clumps. Every here and there a bunch of graceful bamboo trees would throw delicate pointed shadows; little yellow puffs of mimosa yielded vanilla perfume. Everywhere were rushing torrents between great grey boulders, giant grevillea spread its dancing foliage high above lesser vogelli and tree fern.

We would pass women on whose astonishing gold earrings sunlight glinted, their bangles and anklets glinted too, and the jewels studded through their nostrils, and the white of their even teeth showing between lips reddened with betel. In these higher altitudes there was good trout fishing at Nuwara Eliya and in its vicinity, golf and tennis; in fact the main thing there wasn't, unless you went on his rounds with a planter, was walking.

I must confess I was very taken with the genus planter. Tanned men in shorts, topee and tweed coat, speaking to their dark-skinned underlings in a lingo of which I understood nothing, talking, when they got together, either "shop" or the political situation, and every man jack of them wondering how

much further the present Ceylon government would go in its efforts to dislodge the white man. . . .

Once a planter begins to yarn, I listen, as the French say, with all my ears. Their best stories are told at the expense of educated natives or half-castes whose anxiety to use colloquialisms, coupled with an imperfect comprehension of the English idiom, often leads to their downfall. Everyone in Ceylon quotes the fluent remark of a burgher (Eurasian): "Ten miles to the town as the cock crows," and everyone too knows the story of a high native official to whom, after his mistake, the nick-name "Gondola" stuck like a leech.

He was presiding at a meeting where suggestions were being made for improvements designed to attract more visitors to a local park. An Englishman suggested four gondolas on the lake as an added attraction. The proposal was about to be adopted when the native foresaw opportunity for economy.

"But why," drawled he, "four gondolas? I suggest a pair, and let nature do the rest."

He believed gondolas to be some kind of a duck. . . . Ever after, when caricatured, our native friend was portrayed trailing behind him two miniature gondolas on a string.

It is in tea country that you constantly hear the name Creeper. What is a creeper? I finally demanded. Then it appeared a Creeper was an apprentice tea planter who came out from home and paid a premium to be initiated. Referring to young Jones one said, "He creeps on such and such an estate." On some estates the Creeper learned little, because the manager himself was slack or incompetent, and the very best of Planter's hospitality was always at the disposal of any Creeper who had an aptitude for cricket or rugby.

Creepers, in their first year or two, learn to combat the various native wiles to which their elders are already inured. I knew of one whose dairy milk can was delivered, in the first place, at a petrol station, picked up from there by a friend's estate lorry, dumped at a caddy shop (native bazaar) and finally collected from there by his own tappal coolie (estate postman). By the time the can reached home it had acquired a mysterious hole near the top, and the milk therein looked thin and blue. . . .

Life in the Low Country, of course, offers more thrills and dangers, since the jungle is inhabited by python, wild elephant, boar and leopard; while deep sea fishing attracts many of the old timers; sword fish, sail fish, yellow fin tuna averaging nine feet in length being plentiful.

The Low Country is hot, of course, and has malarial belts, but in guise of compensation Buried Cities have been unearthed there amid the tangling overgrowth of thousands of jungle years; gigantic recumbent figures of the Buddha, patiently hewn network of stone, pavements and ceilings chiselled and decorated with fantastic animals.

Occasionally the driver will be told to take care because there is a rogue elephant known to be roaming around. Exactly what is the correct procedure upon meeting one of these redoubtable creatures I never learned. The roads were too narrow and winding to permit of a quick turn, and the jungle came right up to their edge.

At Kandy, about two thousand feet up, is the famous Temple of the Tooth, reputed to be Buddha's but said by experts to be a very old boar's tush. This building is so defaced by scaffoldings, reparations, tawdriness and dirt, and so surrounded by persistent beggars that one leaves it with a bad taste in one's mouth. Money is perpetually being collected from the pious for its upkeep; then some priest or clerk absconds with the funds, and the work is held up once more.

Likewise the Temple's Throne Room is without a throne, as the throne has been leased out to some museum for funds. In fact, when I saw the old palm leaf books I wondered how many treasures the place had once contained, of which it had been stripped.

The main impression left upon me after my visit was that natives of Ceylon and of India are servile and untrustworthy in comparison with those of China.

## CHAPTER XII

### BADLANDS: RATEPAYERS' MEETING

IT was during my stay in Ceylon, enjoying Planter's hospitality (the best ever) that I had seriously thrashed out with my host and hostess the problem of whether or not I was to hang on to my job in Shanghai, or leave. The decision to leave as soon as Japanese interference appeared inevitable was really made then. So the journey back on the *Giulio Cesare* was a sad one.

I did not want to throw up the job that fitted me like an old shoe; I hated the thought of leaving the Chinese; there was lots more I still wanted to see in China, to learn. Also, staying in a British community in Ceylon had shown me devastatingly how far I had journeyed since I had left home; deviated from the orthodox; unlearned my insularity; learned to make my own judgments by an international yardstick.

And on the *Giulio Cesare* I was to have another glimpse of how the world wagged, for a thousand Jewish refugees swarmed over the ship, and I think they were the scum of Europe. Quite obviously most of them, though soap and water were abundant, had not washed their clothes or their socks since leaving home. They stuffed themselves—gorged themselves—with food, then packed handbags with rolls and fruit and spent all the time between meals guzzling.

They entirely defeated me. For the first time in my existence I travelled without conversing with my fellow-passengers and guarding as a precious secret the fact that I understood German. My only converse, indeed, was with one or two of the Italian crew. That, as a matter of fact, did prove interesting, for sight of these rejects of Hitler's thrust on their ship, defiling it with their untidy habits, angered the Italians. For the refugees were so jailed in the Teutonic mould that they exhibited, along with their natural slovenliness, every characteristic of the native German.

Hot under the collar, the officers and crew muttered that the German Government owed and had not paid this Italian Government subsidised line over twenty million lire for credit advanced to Jewish refugees bound for the Far East. By arrangement with the Reichsbank, which guaranteed repayment, each refugee was allowed to order £6 worth of smokes and drinks at the bar of Lloyd Triestino ships during their journey out. Only the Reichsbank had not implemented its promise to repay.

It was being furiously discussed by the Italians whether or not Italy would come into the war by Germany's side. They could not envisage fighting against the English, but even less could they anticipate being ordered to fight on behalf of Germany. One of them said to me, softly, at the end of the inevitable discussion, "Life is beautiful; who wants to die?"

And even while Mussolini was coming to his decision, we anchored in Hongkong harbour, only to find that the island had become a fortress. At least a week before Britain and France declared war British shipping, large and small, had been immobilised in the harbour, ready to evacuate women and

children compulsorily. For it was feared then that Japan would immediately seize the opportunity presented her by our concentration in the west, and attack.

Fortunately the Soviet-German alliance had hit Japan in a soft spot. She did not feel like making a gesture to prove her friendship with a Reich which could so suddenly negotiate an alliance with her sworn enemy. And in any case Japan could not have been ready. She had had a good mauling on the Soviet frontier and her wounded were still recuperating in Harbin and Mukden and Korea so that her people should not realise the extent of the clash.

Besides, as we were afterwards to see, Nippon had a sly plan of taking her fences one by one, as the fortunes of war in Europe suggested. She was to neutralise French Indo-China before she ever came out into the open against the Allies, and when Indo-China went, both Hongkong and Singapore were doomed.

I looked upon Hongkong with anguish the night we left. Many of the island's Germans had crowded on board, realising that they would be interned as enemy aliens if war caught them on British territory. Our Italian ship herself was liable to become an internment camp for me if I were still aboard and Mussolini decided upon immediate participation. In fact, I landed in Shanghai only just in time. Twenty-four hours later, the *Giulio Cesare* was an enemy ship.

I can't explain what Hongkong's beauty means to me. From the first it had had that effect. As I gazed at the black silhouette of its peaks against a glimmering moonlit sky, strung and laced with its diamond lights, I heard my Jewish fellow-travellers breathe, "There CAN be no other like it." Would its beloved outline have been hideously changed in the crucible of war ere I set eyes on it again? It was my last glimpse of British soil for God knew how long, and there was I bound for International Shanghai from whence British troops were liable to be withdrawn at any moment, and on which Japan had already closed her grasping fingers.

I came back to find organised infiltration by puppet "Ta Taos" into our Outside Roads, a larger number than ever of rich men's mansions open as gambling dens, with gunmen at their gates whose greatest joy was to intimidate the white man or woman, or to bully poor Chinese workfolk as they passed along the pavements; making them step off into the road at a flourish of loaded Mauser; demanding "protection tax" from all and sundry.

One of the biggest houses of all had been taken over and fortified, and to it added a whole string of smaller houses of which the furniture, while tenants were absent on holiday, was either taken over too or put out into the road. This was to be the new residence of Wang Ching Wei, the renegade; and had been merely filched from its absentee owner. I had to pass it daily on my way to work or into town.

In some cases you would see two policemen standing at one crossroads, one the authorised Municipal employee, the other a puppet, with no training, who would give right of way to one vehicle just as the Municipal man was signalling to a car on the other road. The motorist paid no attention to the puppets, and thus avoided confusion, but at one small crossing where no police had been stationed before, a couple of puppets took their stand and one, angered because an owner-driver ignored his signal, sent a bullet flying after him!

An attempt was made too, to tax Outside Roads residents on behalf of the Great Way puppet government, but I ignored the demand and I don't think anyone paid.

There was one Sikh policeman who stood firm at Edinburgh Road crossing.



He had an electric light signal to manipulate, and kept a firm hand on the lever all the time, so no one paid any attention to the shabby puppet waving a baton.

Until 3rd October, when, on going home for lunch, I had a shock. Intense activity prevailed all along the two-mile long Yu Yuen Road. Trucks disgorged armed Ta Tao police, and these proceeded to line both sides of the road, with twenty feet between each man. Knots of Chinese spectators always eager for any show whether against them or no, stood at gateways watching. Our die-hard Sikh at the Edinburgh Road crossing had at long last abandoned his traffic light, but he had first locked it; no light showed. His Ta Tao opponent functioned importantly but erratically in his stead.

I caught my breath. Our last man gone!

Suddenly there came a roaring from down the street. Motor bicycles erupted into view, bestridden by squat Japs, who held sawn-off shot-guns in the crook of their arms, pointed at the crowd. Followed cars, filled with men armed to the teeth, cars and yet more cars, tearing along and turning at last into Wang Ching Wei's fortified castle. . . . So that was what all the fuss was about. The puppet had come "home."

The street remained in Japanese hands for a few hours. Our police had apparently known what was going to happen, and had stood aside. Finally the puppets were withdrawn, a few Municipal police put in an appearance, and the Edinburgh Road light began to function again, while small boys, as they scorched past the ineffective puppet on their bikes, hooted derisively.

A few nights later I was in the road asking a noisy street vendor to move away from my flats. The man moved, but one of his customers waxed abusive, knowing a little English. "You get out of here," he shouted to me, "or I catch Ta Tao policeman for you." I was wondering how to retire gracefully without acknowledging defeat when a welcome and totally unexpected Cockney voice said, "Eie, 'oo're you torkin' tew? Tyke that!" and a little soldier lad who had been passing in a rubber-tyred rickshaw boxed my antagonist expertly on both ears. The coolie promptly disappeared, and I went in chuckling. Puppets had actually arrested Britons once or twice, and I had not wanted to spend any time locked up in a lousy cell. (The adjective is meant literally.)

It was impossible to close one's eyes to the deterioration going on all around. In some way it affected us all. Many faithful servants had left their employment in 1937 and gone "to the country" in an attempt to save their wives and children ere the invading hordes reached them. After that, silence. Other Boys were employed, but unless introduced by a Chinese known to one personally, these were not always to be trusted; the testimonials they displayed had quite probably been borrowed from a pal.

Just as 1940 dawned I hired a small slim individual recommended by a friend's servant. In the way of the East, responsibility for the newcomer is "on the body" of his recommender if he should do wrong. Yung had his small son and the boy's mother near Wenchow. This is often done for cheapness. Somewhere is the plot of ancestral land to which the scattered family can flee in times of trouble, or when they expect to be for a long while unemployed.

Yung had small quarters in the basement. I inspected his bright flowered bedding to see if it was clean, and found him a satisfactory servant, except for one thing. After he had been with me for a few days, he borrowed an advance upon his wages. A few days later he turned up with a long face and a tale of having had his pocket picked in a bus. I received the tale—quite a feasible one—with an expressionless face, without comment. But when he wound up, "So, Missie, I no have money for buy rice," I advanced a further small sum.

As the end of January drew near, and with it Chinese preparations for the New Year, which was to fall on 8th February, I found in the kitchen drawer a

little brown paper parcel containing a small boy's cap and a couple of pairs of child's socks. "Is this yours, Boy?" I asked.

"Yes, Missie. I have buy to send my son for New Year. Yesterday I have takee post office—a! yah!—this post office man wantchee too much money for stamps, Wenchow too long way."

I pondered for a day or two on this Chinese habit of doing quite cheerfully without wives and families over long periods, though the males somehow contrive to be the proudest and most prolific of fathers, then I felt sorry for the little lad in Wenchow who might not get his new cap and socks in time for New Year unless I gave aid.

So near the end of January I handed Yung twenty dollars, his New Year "cumshaw," and he appeared grateful. I had noticed when he took the dog out he walked with his thin shoulders contracted against the cold, and that his hands had chapped. So I bought him goloshes and leather gloves. My intention was to rehabilitate him, since like so many of his countrymen, his life had probably been dislocated by Japanese aggression.

But early in February I sought for a length of dress material and could not find it in its familiar place. Startled, I made for my linen cupboard and a cherished piece of satin brocade hand-woven in Nanking. That, too, had gone.

I said nothing to Yung. But I went carefully back in my mind over things that had occurred since his advent. His bright bedding, gone from his room on the second day. The urgent visit, while he was out, of a coohe friend of his demanding repayment of a debt. The door I had twice heard softly closing at four and had taken for his, though he denied it. His absent-mindedness, a spiritlessness unusual in a servant with his mind on a job. All of which now linked up with the loss of my possessions and brought me to the unavoidable conclusion.

So, Monday afternoon after work, I called in at Bubbling Well Police Station. "I have lost some things from my house," I stated, "and I have only one servant."

At six my door bell rang; an English plain clothes detective and three Chinese were ushered in by my Boy. As he turned to go I said, "Just a minute, Boy."

One of the Chinese asked him a few questions. Where is your home? How long have you been here? . . . Then the foreigner said:

"Does anyone come into the flat when Missie is out?"

"Oh, no, Master."

"Your friends no come upstairs see you?"

"No, Master. Missie no like. If I see friends, go outside see."

"You no have pay stranger come inside this house?"

"No, Master."

"You go outside, always lock door?"

"Yes, Master."

"Then suppose Missie have lose something, must be you have take?"

There was a long pause, while the significance of the trap he had fallen into seized the white-faced Boy by the throat. He gulped, and could not speak.

"Well, Boy, I waitee for answer. Must be you, eh?"

All of a sudden the Boy broke. He clasped his hands, turned from his inexorable questioner, and falling on the ground, kowtowed to me. "I tell Missie," he quavered. "Missie, belong this gambling. I all time lose money. Downstairs have got all pawn ticket—"

"All right, Boy. Go down with him, Doo and Lee, and bring 'em up."

As the culprit left between two Chinese to get the pawn tickets I handed the foreigner a cigarette and we lit up. "I didn't think he'd break so soon," said I

"It's the same tale all over," soliloquised the detective. "All around these Badlands. They go to these places the first time, and the game's rigged so as to make 'em win twenty dollars or so. The poor fools never win again, but they go on, hoping and hoping, till they've pawned all their own stuff, and then they begin to 'borrow' Missie's. Here they are; we'll see how much you've lost."

I could have gasped at the wad of pawn tickets. "Only the top seven are yours," they said. . . . "Here, Boy, this one. Eight dollars, what's that?"

Yung was doing the best he could to help us out now he was caught. "That belong Missie, woollen blanket." "And this, six dollars?" "Belong electric fan" . . . and so on, through seven tickets. In one or two cases Yung didn't know the correct English designation and said, "one piece cloth." So I had to chance my luck on the cherished brocade being amongst them. The inquisition over, the culprit knocked his forehead on the floor again. "No send me prison, please, Missie."

I ignored him. "What does it all add up to?" I asked. "Forty-four dollars."

For less than a pound I could buy back my stolen goods, for Chinese law is not like ours, and pawnshops are not penalised for buying stolen property. Nor does the State prosecute a thief. He is either charged by the person he robbed, or set free.

I turned to Yung. "If you can get the forty-four dollars," I said, "we'll let you go." Privately, however, I indicated to the detective that I'd not prosecute. He had a parting word for me as he left. "They've no gratitude, these people," he said. "You've been too good to this one. They don't understand it; thank you're soft."

I let that sink in while, enveloped in an overall, I stoked my central heating, cooked my supper, exercised my dog, and went to bed in a disturbed frame of mind; while all around me, in the Badlands, gambling houses and their immediate adjuncts, the pawn shops, open all night, made roaring profits.

Next day I handed forty-four dollars to the police and by evening, Yung having been released, they had most of my goods. But the brocade was still missing; a sheeny strip of creamy satin, threaded with gold, terra cotta and sage green. What had Yung done with it? Sold the pawn ticket to someone else as they sometimes did?

When five days had elapsed and the police seemed no nearer to it, I took matters into my own hands and played my own card. Did I not know that upon a Celestial's body lies any fault committed by his nominee for a post? Calling upon the fellow who had recommended Yung I asked to see the culprit. Naturally he professed to know nothing of the Boy's whereabouts, but all the same, I felt as if I had rubbed an Aladdin's lamp and the genii would appear.

He did, cringing, in the dark. I gave him his few goods and chattels. The pawnshop containing my brocade was, he said, only a stone's throw from my door, and it had been pawned only two days before I had discovered the loss. We had to get the police to accompany us, as the ticket had been somehow mislaid.

The dead face of the assistant betrayed no emotion when told we wanted brocade pawned on 2nd February, for which the ticket had been lost. His black eyes slid over the cringing, unshaven culprit and passed back and forth sizing up his police escort, with myself in the background. After a pause he turned and gave an order.

A Chinese who had received a good cumshaw on New Year's Day came in and redeemed a pair of fleece-lined pants. Only as he bent, there and then, to put them on, did I see that, beneath his long gown, he had previously been wearing thin, pink-striped flannellette underwear. Another came in quickly

and divested himself of a padded coat and white-cotton singlet, shivering as he pushed them across the counter and covered his frame with a light coat.

"Bugs," I thought, shuddering at the proximity of my rich brocade with these unfortunate gamblers' garments. . . . And just then, in came a carefully-tied paper parcel. "Have got," said the dead-faced one, laconically.

So I handed over five dollars, 2s., for which deusive sum it had been pledged, and came away.

The record of Shanghai from the time of puppetry until I left in summer, 1941, is concerned mainly with the disintegration of a once proud city under corruption and gangsters' rule, while the foreigner made valiant efforts to hang on. To many thousands of us, not by any means solely English, it was our daily bread; we had loosened our ties with home to come out; we had given good service to the best of our ability; many had bought houses or land there; to leave meant the sacrifice of pensions, a venture at middle age or past it into an unknown land. Like the Jews in Europe when Hitler first showed his hand, we were tempted to hang on and hang on in the hope of betterment. Only those trained to read the signs of the times guessed that Japan would gather her strength and strike in the Orient when England seemed hardest pressed in Europe. But even they could hardly credit that Nippon would be willing to take on the United States as well. One could not foresee Pearl Harbour.

In the Badlands where I lived and worked, it became necessary for our police to stop all buses and trams and cars and search native passengers for guns and ammunition. At the main arteries were bottlenecks of barbed wire to prevent swift getaway, strongly guarded. Occasionally one of us would be sitting in a bus when the searchers started a hare, who would leap out of the window and take to his heels, being far too busy running away to fire back at our fellows sniping from the bus.

One day when I was travelling a nasty-looking customer on the Number One route produced a pistol from his long gown and thoughtfully balanced it in his hand. We passengers, struck dumb, fastened fascinated eyes on the weapon. We did not know whether he was a kidnapper, accompanying or dogging a victim at that moment in the bus with us, or simply a gangster who didn't give a hang for anybody. We froze in our seats and got thankfully out at the nearest stop, and smiled, a little later, to realise that none of us had paid any fares. . . .

Then there were friends of mine shaking the dust of Shanghai from off their feet, who had sold their car but retained use of it until they sailed. Yet when I gave a farewell party for them one Saturday they arrived by rickshaw. "We daren't leave our car parked here in the Badlands," they said, "it might get stolen, and . . . er . . . as we've been paid for it already. . . ."

I myself had developed the habit, when I came home after dark, of shifting my key to my glove, or to an inner coat pocket. Then if I got held up for my handbag, at least I could let myself into the house afterwards! A Chinese woman living not far from me had been caught just as she was about to turn her key in the lock. The gunmen followed her in, and ransacked the house under her nose.

The pistols used in these affairs were usually those stolen from our legitimate police, and the men wielding them were nearly all puppet police appointed by the Japs. Only by now these had been provided with rifles, and rifles are not much good for holding up civilians when dressed in plain clothes. They were paid a starvation wage only, and were expected to graft in their spare time, in the immemorial way of the East.

The reader should remember that for centuries China has held soldiers to be the lowest of the low. Mercenaries, they sold their services to the highest bidder; and, when financial arrangements were satisfactory, went over to the

other side. They terrorised the populace and lived off them. General Chiang Kai-Shek has altered all this insofar as his own army is concerned; and the Chinese Reds, acting along communistic lines, fraternise with the people instead of bullying them.

But, though there are patriots in Free China, we in the two foreign settlements of Shanghai saw nothing of them. We had traced the background of these puppets, and their history was illuminating. At the outset of this final clash with Japan, a few large Chinese prisons had been thrown open, the inmates had been armed with rifles and taught, in rough and ready fashion, to shoot.

These men got their pay, so they fought stubbornly against heavy odds. A large contingent was over in Pootung. Finally, when their line broke and retreated, an odd thousand or so were cut off by the enemy. Some were herded into a warehouse after laying down their arms, and burnt; the others, rather than face a similar fate, became vassals of Nippon, and first "policed" Pootung. Later these same ex-prisoner, ex-soldier puppets were brought over to police our Badlands.

They never, of course, stepped in on the side of law and order. They concentrated on disputing the authority of our trained men, leaving the paths and rabbit warrens, wooden-shed factories and squalid squatters' huts of their own territory severely alone, after having collected "protection tax" from even the poorest. Concentrating on our Municipal Roads, they had ample opportunity of watching out for victims of some future kidnapping and learning their movements. In consequence, rich men moved quietly out of the district, and if the only people willing to buy their large houses were gambling-den proprietors, well, they took the money and asked no questions.

Our own police were still patrolling occasionally, but in squads of six or eight men, with blued steel gleaming in their hands. Once, searching a bus, one of these squads came across a man who claimed to be a member of the Japanese-inspired "Special Municipality" and therefore exempt from search. He produced no proof, but when our men insisted, he scuffled with them, got out on to the road, and called a puppet to his aid. Without attempting to investigate, the puppet fired wildly, and a pal came up and helped, followed by quite a number. In the end our police, who had been instructed to keep out of brawls by hook or crook, were actually "arrested," and disarmed by these unrecognised irregulars, and after a few days when their release had been effected and the return of their weapons, each man was still short of a few personal effects like watches, pocket-books, etc.

An English widow who lived up an alley off the main road was asked to pay tax to the Ta Taos, and when she refused, was told calmly that one of her three children would be kidnapped if she continued to resist. As she did not actually live on the road any attempt of our police to protect her might cause repercussions, since the alley was considered Ta Tao territory. She could not find a house elsewhere, for, as can be imagined, the "safer" parts of Shanghai were chock-a-block, and ridiculous sums in "key-money" were being demanded by owners of empty houses.

As I occasionally went home late at night, I would think over the amazing degradation of these Badlands. Up every alleyway and side-track off Yu Yuen Road flourished some tawdry brothel or gambling den, and at night there resounded the ribald song of Russian roysterers, the shrieks of drunken dancing girls, the manœuvring of cars under unsteady control, and the staccato of shots.

In Great Western Road, which had been accounted a little better, an incident occurred which put all its little beer halls out of bounds to British troops for the time being.

A band of puppets met a little group of Tommies, unarmed and off duty, making for the nearest pub, the "Busy Bee." Said one puppet, "Let's spread out across the road," and they did. Our soldier lads, taking it as a spree, passed the word along, and with a joyous whoop and a concerted rugger tackle, burst through the cordon, and made for the "Busy Bee" where they celebrated their scrimmage with what they called the "Tatoes."

They didn't reckon, however, for the sequel. While the beer was circulating a Chinese child suddenly shrilled a warning, and the proprietor, a Dane, bolted his front door. Just in time, for bullets began to spatter on it and finally it was splintered open by rifle stocks. Our puppets, mortally offended, had gone for reinforcements and were out for British blood!

The personnel of the pub took cover; our Tommies, unarmed, legged it out the back way; a Chinese woman got a fatal wound in the abdomen, and bullets, fired wildly in the darkness up a broad drive nearby, in the hope of hitting some of the vanished soldiers, spattered against the verandah of a big private house where friends of mine were drinking coffee.

There was only one thing to do and they did it. Putting down their cups they dropped to the floor and squatted there like frogs on all fours, gazing at each other in strained silence, while bullets ricocheted against the walls outside. One dashed for the light and put it out. . . .

Then there were the hair-trigger potentialities of one Saturday afternoon, at the corner of Yu Yuen and Edinburgh Roads, when a couple of puppets in plain clothes took pot shots at our Sikh policeman at the traffic light. Though wounded, the tall bearded warrior went on manipulating his light after he had walked over to the phone and notified Bubbling Well of the occurrence. An ambulance and reinforcements were sent, the wounded one relinquished his light standard to a fellow-Sikh, and walked with dignity to the ambulance; British troops rushed up in lorries and proceeded to build sandbag emplacements on the two strategic corners covering the light; Red Marias and tanks rolled up, and from one turret a foreign police officer covered a nervous-looking puppet still attempting to direct traffic, with a wicked-looking sub-machine gun.

The Saturday holiday crowd gave special honour to the Sikh who had replaced his wounded comrade, and who stood, tall and superbly arrogant, manipulating the lights as though the undersized creature at his side were only a contemptible insect. Knots of Chinese, Sikh, Russian and British Municipal police, with rifles cradled in the crook of their arms, or sawed-off shot guns, hung about, while a shabby lot of puppets began to gather. One of them was seen to be taking lessons in loading and unloading, there on the kerb.

Apparently the situation was to be aggravated (as it most probably had originally been caused) by a visit of the arch-traitor Wang Ching Wei to his fortified camp. So, just as they had once before, up Yu Yuen Road shuffled three hundred Ta Tao men to take over the road in their usual fashion—fit guardians of a puppet leader.

Only, this time our police had not withdrawn. At Edinburgh Road corner they stood tense; sandbag emplacements had grown to a useful height already; the soldiers who had built them were not to be seen, but they were unobtrusively with call.

Then for a breathless couple of minutes naked danger stared us in the face, for the screeching of sirens heralded the approach of Wang and of his promoters and satellites. Japanese officers armed to the teeth on motor-bikes and in side-cars, exploded into sight; the usurper on the traffic standard extended his baton. Simultaneously, without the slightest expression on his bearded face, the Sikh gave the green light, and the procession rocketed past.

My spine chilled. Every passenger in side-cars and open cars which followed carried either pistols or short-barrelled guns, pointed at us, the

crowd. One jolt too much, one careless movement, a single gesture misinterpreted by the puppet coolies in uniform lining our road, and that corner would become a shambles.

But nothing went wrong. Only, from that day on, British soldiers manned the sandbag barricades they had built, and no further attempts were made to wrest physical control of traffic points from our police.

The idea had not by any means been given up, however. There presented itself to the minds of the Japanese another way, more subtle, of attaining their ends. In April, 1940, came elections. And by clever manipulating Nippon saw a way of out-voting the white electorate.

At the risk of boring readers with repetition I will recapitulate that the Council of Fourteen administering the Settlement had been composed almost invariably of five Britons, two Americans, two Japanese, and five Chinese. *This ratio was based roughly on the actual tax-paying property owned in the Settlement by the various nationals.*

Since the industrial half of the city had been under the control of Japan's army, living conditions there had been made so unbearable to foreigners that white people had preferred to live south of the creek which was the boundary line between enslaved and free. Also, with the ruination of factories in that area, a certain proportion of administrative staff formerly required to live near their work had moved into our seven square miles. Japanese merchants, Koreans, geisha girls, Japanese subjects of every kind, had flocked to the region of "Little Tokio," and now pressure was brought to bear upon the Jews crowded there, so as to influence their votes in favour of Japan.

They were told that if they would vote as their Japanese landlords dictated, permission would be given them to bring out more of their relatives from Europe. . . .

Broadway Mansions, a huge British investment not many years old, had finally sold out at a loss to Japanese interests. And in connexion with this sale, a whisper began to circulate, and the closely-guarded Japanese secret, as secrets will in Oriental countries, leaked out.

The great idea was to increase exceedingly the number of Japanese voters by registering each man who, for instance, occupied a room in Broadway Mansions or in any Japanese-owned building, as a ratepayer, relying on the contention that he was paying "indirect rates" to the Council through his landlord. This might be permissible if the practice were adopted and publicised throughout Shanghai, but it was not. The enormous consequent increase of Japanese ratepayers were to be registered and sprung upon us at the last possible minute just before our April election, together with the equally sudden nomination of five, instead of two, Japanese candidates.

I must call attention to the fact that even had Japs outnumbered all other nationals in Shanghai, they would not have been entitled to greater representation unless their financial commitments in real estate dominated all others. Just because you crammed fifty Japs in a house paying low rates where a white man would house only a single family, you would not expect fifty votes against the one which would be registered if the same house were occupied by whites. Nor could any change be effected in the membership of Shanghai's Council without consular agreement from all nationals involved.

Well, when the secret leaked out there ran at once among British and American ratepayers swift undercurrents of advice and information. Many who had never voted before were routed out; even those from one-room apartments and hotels; two could play at that game. . . . Little old maids, living alone, and about whom nobody had bothered for years, were offered lifts to the polls. We also all became acutely aware of the Jewish refugees who had become ratepayers and of Japan's despicable bribe to them.

Now, although the district north of the creek was cheaper for them to live in, the Mecca of them all, as a sign of success, was to extricate themselves from this devastated area into the better-regulated white man's portion. Besides, most of the money contributed to their camps, kitchens and schools had come from white men's pockets. . . . On one side was fear lest the polls should not really be secret (after Hitler's Germany who can blame them?) while on the other stood realisation that Japan, given the upper hand, would as surely sweep the white man out of Shanghai as Streicher cleared Jews from his path in Europe.

The issue had really been forced into one of Yellow Man versus White. . . . On Voting Day the foreigner rallied his forces and white votes led Japanese by a two thousand majority. . . . For once, in history, Nippon had been originator and the white man copyist.

Close on the heels of this exciting election followed the once-yearly Ratepayers' Meeting to discuss the budget. This was preceded by much skirmishing in the local press, for, to add to its other tribulations, the Council had to admit that its coffers were bare, that it was already indebted to British banks to the tune of several million dollars, and that no more loans would be granted by these banks until Ratepayers had done their share by voting for themselves an increase of 50 per cent on the Rates.

Shanghai's ratepayers in the past had been most reluctant to increase Council's revenue in the obvious way. They had no Income Tax, and previous proposals for increase in the Rates had been voted down. Now, however, the danger of Japan overshadowed everything else; obviously the Council could not be allowed to go into bankruptcy and thus give the enemy a chance to step in. So, having surmounted the hurdle of elections, Ratepayers turned up en masse to what one might call our local "Parliament"—though it meets but once a year—held in the typical easy-going fashion of our city, on the British Racecourse.

Chinese, Germans, British, Italians, Jews and Gentiles, having at last swallowed the necessity for the rise in rates, decided to get the unpleasant job quickly over. Maintenance of the world's biggest jail, and of the world's biggest police force for the area covered, support of refugee camps and other charities, and the rise in price of all commodities not only because of local conditions, but owing to the war in Europe, all these made the big hike in rates obligatory.

It was a fresh spring afternoon. The first speechmaker brought up the usual hoary annual suggestion that the Municipal Orchestra be disbanded for economy's sake, though the cost of its maintenance amounted to only 1 per cent of Municipal expenditure and the orchestra was our only attempt at any kind of culture fostered by the municipality. Every year, shaking in its shoes, the hapless orchestra would go through the process of being condemned at the Ratepayers' Meeting and before, and of being voted back into existence for another twelve months.

The speechmaker reached his twenty minutes' allowance with the Chairman willing to permit a little latitude, but the crowd, parliament, call it what you will, had kept an eye on the clock and decided otherwise. It had collected from all corners of Shanghai at considerable difficulty to itself to vote in the Budget and it didn't intend to stay all afternoon. There were several propositions down for discussion and twenty minutes was more than enough for any of them. So the crowd began to clap, louder and louder, and the speechmaker, defeated, had to retire. His motion for the dissolution of the orchestra was voted down with joyous decision.

And so on through the speechmakers. Minds had been made up beforehand. An Economy Committee to inquire into the Council's finances? Of course!



Motion carried! . . . Then a chill rain began to fall, and visions of cosy fire-sides and cups of tea danced before a crowd uncomfortable for the last two hours on hard benches of the Race Stand.

So when a local Highlander who had earned much opprobrium at Election time by putting up as an Independent candidate and thus risking division of the white men's votes, took the stand, people glanced once more at their watches. Macdonald had received a derisive three hundred votes, and now he was to have his revenge. The whole body of Ratepayers at his mercy for a precious twenty minutes!

Or that's what *he* thought. But Shanghai knows its own mind, and it knew Macdonald's rapier tongue, and as I have said, it was teatime and one advantage of meeting only once a year is anonymity. You don't have to toe the line too vigorously. You can't be called to order, or if you are, you needn't listen.

So the Ratepayers just didn't. Not one minute of his allotted time did the unfortunate Highlander manage to filch. "I'll just give you a lightning sketch," said he, and the rest was oblivion. The meeting clapped, jeered, cat-called and stamped at the irascible little lawyer as he pointed his finger at them and shouted, "You'll regret this!"

"Vote!" they cried, knowing he was the last speaker. "Vote! Vooooote!" and reached for their raincoats. He had to give up; the Municipal budget, 50 per cent hike and all, was hilariously voted through, and Ratepayers were stampeding home almost before the meeting was officially declared closed. Yet homesiders talk about the dilatory Orient!

## CHAPTER XIII

### DREGS OF WARFARE: KOREA

ALL this while, refugee camps had still been maintained in Shanghai and their maintenance weighed heavily upon a community anxious to contribute all it could to war in Europe. The Sino-Japanese war had gone on so long, and the Japanese had made such extensive gains, that it became clear they would soon have about half the population of China working in the districts they controlled. Under these conditions we were doing no especial good by housing and feeding 150,000 out of two hundred million.

Compromise, you see, is dear to the Chinese heart, and over and above all questions of face-saving rose the paramount necessity of filling the families' rice bowls. Being fundamentally an agriculturist and a tradesman, whose life-ties are bound up with his ancestral soil, the Chinese reverted ultimately, against all difficulties and oppression, to the devastation from which war had driven him. We in Shanghai watched as countless thousands accepted wages from Japanese hands, paid squeeze to Japanese minions, even while these same minions fastened such a stranglehold on food that the poor starved to death in the streets.

After all, the great majority of China's four hundred and fifty million are coolies, knowing little of loyalty or patriotism. If a trader knew of some profitable deal in occupied territory at the expense of "face" he would scrap the precious myth every time in favour of money in his pocket, and, hat in hand, bowing low, he would pass before his overlords at the gate, and pay their toll. Necessity knows no law. In his innermost heart, he is confident of his superiority and of the fact that in the long run he will triumph.

We foreigners, watching, could only emulate Chinese patience, and go on hanging on with our toenails. . . . Our Seaforth Highlanders had faded away silently at three hours' notice, only the Durhams were left to uphold whatever prestige remained to Britain after her countless concessions to Nippon. America had at last taken a hand in the game and revoked her trade treaty with Japan.

It was difficult to see what Japan was driving at, since she made no attempt to rehabilitate her conquered areas, and though some foreign firms had, at excessive cost owing to obstructionism and profiteering, rebuilt their property, the majority of ruins gaped and tottered, and, if left unwatched, disintegrated as precious bricks were filched and carted away for construction of new mills by the Japanese.

It was as if her army had gone mad with lust for conquest, for rape, murder, torture and destruction; and as if there were no force in the background for stabilisation or reconstruction. By the blockading of Tientsin, the closure of the Yangtze to foreign vessels, and the treatment of foreigners and their interests generally, Tokio had finally disclosed its intention of driving the white man out of East Asia. And, whereas the Powers had apparently been prepared at the outset to allow Japan's conquest of China's northern areas and to accept the *fait accompli*, they were now being forced to espouse China's cause as their own.

Meanwhile, the refugees in our midst, both in Frenchtown and in the International Settlement, showed no sign of moving. We began to investigate conditions more closely. Some, we discovered, were hoarding money while living on our charity; others, when work was found for them, refused it. One case came to light and made us extremely wrathful.

A certain missionary had, out of his own pocket, bought a load of ashes to cover over a muddy morass in the centre of his pet refugee camp. Not only were mosquitoes breeding there, but the space allotted to inmates was restricted by the mud.

When the ashes arrived both driver and coolie in charge refused to unload, arguing that they were only paid to deliver. Our missionary thereupon turned to his refugees and appealed to them for help. They laughed. One of them drew himself up and said, "I no belong coolie. I do cook-pidgin." Another said he was a tailor and so on. Till at length the missionary took off his coat and unloaded a lorry load of ash himself.

During the subsequent inquiry into the administration and running of various camps, many frauds were exposed. Some camp-foremen were found to have been short-rationing their camps and selling "refugee rice" outside. Many campers, poor in outward appearance, had been going out daily to work, concealing their wages, and living free on the bounty of their fellows. Part of our taxes had to be earmarked to pay Municipal coolies to clean up the camps since the inmates would not do it, and our own health depended upon cleanliness all about us. A good deal of weeding out was done, and the number of refugees dwindled to 65,000 in the Settlement alone.

Other outcasts were patients of the Henry Lester Hospital for Chinese. Henry Lester, an Englishman, had left much property and considerable cash when he died. On the site of an old London Missionary Society Hospital his money had built a new modern building for Chinese which, by a clause in his will, was to be staffed, as far as possible, by missionary workers as before.

Owing to the hostilities, a good deal of his property was not paying, so funds were tight; but the International Red Cross had made the hospital a large grant at outbreak of war, and by using candles instead of electricity at night, and by various other means, the money had been made to stretch. Leg-rests and back-rests had been rigged by surgeons and nurses out of bamboo and rope; occupational therapy was in full swing. I remember one ex-soldier with a

fractured leg who had designed an intricate scene in cross stitch on a large square of canvas. Excessively tall mountains, one topped with a pagoda; a snorting dragon stalking the slope, a Peking dog and pine trees. . . .

Some of the patients had suffered from *beri beri*, the disease of malnutrition. Swollen and unconscious, if they had six hours of life left in them, they could be saved by injection of the necessary vitamin. "I saw one die," stated one of the sisters, "that is, his heart-beat and respiration had stopped. Then we injected, and he came to life under our eyes."

One gentle old man with a white goatee beard had been shot by Japs because he had ventured a little way out from his hut at nine o'clock one night, thus violating their curfew. He had heard a noise, he said. . . . Some neighbour's girl child, it may have been, a prey to the lust of roving soldiery. In any case, they wanted no witnesses, and shot him.

Talking to a member of the After Care Committee gave me a glimpse behind the scenes of Chinese brutality, too. "We have dealt with 1,400 cases of poverty and homelessness in sixteen months," she told me. Some of the hospital's inmates having been picked up in the streets had nowhere to go when cured. For instance, a thirteen year old girl, brought in by a woman whom the staff suspected of owning her as a slave. The girl who was about to bear a child, could not be coaxed to utter a single word in explanation of her plight; she had probably been threatened with dire consequences if she disobeyed.

Her baby was born dead. When she had recovered she left, still mute and cowed, in company with the old harridan who had brought her in.

But apparently when the slave-girl returned to the household of the Chinese master who had raped her and who still considered her his chattel, his partiality for her roused the jealousy of his lawful wife, who filled the unfortunate child up with *samshu* one freezing night and turned her out in the streets to die. Drunk as she was (the fiery rice-wine probably saved her life), the poor little slave, her terrified silence broken at last under the even greater terror of death, managed to recall and repeat, as she staggered along the dark roads, the name of the one place where she had been treated with tenderness and pity. And so the Lester Hospital received her back, and placed her with the "Door of Hope"—a local home for girls—after setting machinery to work which gave her mistress due punishment and her master 18 months' imprisonment.

The last camp I visited was a Salvation Army one for Wild Boys. These often come into the care of the Salvation Army after being picked up by the police, or upon being released from prison. Often these ragged, homeless urchins were exploited by a "Wild Uncle" who organised their depredations, sending them out to forage or to steal, and living on their earnings. Washed, clothed, disciplined, and taught to read and write, they were then set to learn some trade. Just a few, hearing of the camp, joined it on their own.

In about two years the finished product was duly apprenticed to some merchant, and stood a fair chance of becoming a shopkeeper himself some day. Shoemakers, basketmakers, weavers, spinners and tailors toiled at their chosen trades heartened by the knowledge that a small bank balance was accumulating for each, being profit on the sales of his work.

Other Wild Boys, lost in the wide hinterland, with the joyous persistence which was a characteristic, set out undaunted by distance to join their country's army. More than 20,000 "Little Devils" (*Siao Kuei*) as they are there named, belong to the Eighth Army alone, their ages ranging from 11 to 16. Too young at first to fight, they carry messages, produce and act plays to educate "the masses" to the meaning of the war, render first-aid, make officers' beds, etc. As they mature they become first-rate soldiers.

Even these, like their more restricted cousins of the big city, were taught to read and write; they picked up all sorts of odds and ends of information,

military and otherwise, furiously debated tactics, outlining in the dust with grubby fingers intricate plans of campaign.

In Shanghai's Badlands, as puppet grips grew tighter and our own police's hold slackened, bands of beggars and Wild Boys would roam seeking mischief. Well I remember watching two such gangs fight it out over a luckless Chinese and rickshaw coolie. The Chinese, when they persistently begged from him, had given a small "cumshaw" to one gang; then called a rickshaw and got in. The second gang came up and demanded a tip likewise; when he paid no attention, they hung on to the shafts, hood and spokes, calling out that they wouldn't let go until they were paid.

The coolie, highly enraged, bellowed and pulled. The Chinese did the only thing possible, sat tight and laughed, while the two rival bands, the paid and the unpaid, pulled on the rickshaw in two different directions, almost wrecking it. Finally the combined efforts of the rickshawman and the paid won, and the vehicle got going. A cheer arose as it went off and the defeated ones, letting go, sat back suddenly on their rumps. Everyone had a hearty laugh all round, and the crisis was over.

The open air circus almost opposite my flats had given place to an all-night cabaret. Wild children, taught no doubt by the Tommies who once patrolled this district, took to following late revellers in a flock, chanting "I'm sorry for myself," which invariably raised a laugh and pried money out of the inebriate.

Coal lorries slackening speed to turn in to some driveway would lose coal as long tongs snatched at it. Vegetable supplies were plundered in the same way; rice or flour sacks would be jabbed at by some pointed instrument, and as the long stream of grain or flour poured out, ragamuffins with baskets and bags, grown-ups, women with dustpans and brushes, would help themselves to the plunder.

It was painful to watch the disintegration of younger Chinese when they saw that they could make easy money by questionable means. There was one, a coolie who worked for English people out in Hungjao. He got in with some turncoat Chinese who persuaded him to join them as a fledgling gunman. So, as a prelude to making a respectable appearance on the Badlands roads, he stole several suits of master's clothes, and left; trying them on at leisure, and selling those he did not like to a pawnshop.

Which was where he made his big mistake. For master followed up the loss of his suits, and on the pawntickets appeared the coolie's new address. When arrested for theft he had a nice big pistol against his side, one of those stolen from our police during patrol work. Poor lad; he had not as yet encompassed any murders, but, upon being questioned, admitted that he was to be paid forty dollars a month; eighteen shillings . . . truly a princely sum for murder.

All this while the Whangpoo was silting up, and bade fair to deserve once again its old name of Yellow Creek. And the Yangtze, while, as the Japs stated, "unsafe for merchant shipping," bore on its broad bosom Japanese ships carrying crammed cargoes of dried lilies, melon seeds, sandalwood, piece goods and feathers, etc., none of which could come under the heading of military supplies.

But the Japs were not having it all their own way. A certain Jap was kidnapped from aboard one vessel, ransomed, and then kindly picked up again by a second band of kidnappers and made to pay ransom a second time!

But it seemed obvious that Shanghai would sooner or later be taken over by Japan. Though as an International Settlement such a process presented the difficulty that a great number of nations were concerned, the fact also stared at me that, being international, it was very definitely "nobody's baby." Nations

deeply involved elsewhere would protest, yes; but would any lesser nation than Britain and the States go to war over it? Certainly not, especially as the investments of these nations topped every other. So Japan only had to wait until the States were more deeply involved in Europe . . . or so I thought in summer 1940.

Summer holidays, therefore, should be in the nature of a farewell. Somewhere off the beaten track, away from all the other places I had visited in my fourteen years of residence. Korea, perhaps, where I could study a nation under the heel of Nippon for several decades, and see what fate the Japs planned for our friends the Chinese. I already knew the Korean as a dirty, slatternly-looking Oriental to be seen working on roads in Japan, forcibly imported, living in squalid huts thrown together anyhow close to the scene of his labours; a lonely outcast slave doing the work no Japanese would soil his hand at.

Koreans were often the ones to throw bombs or foster underground rebellion. Well, I would go and see.

So Tony the aliedale and I took passage on a Jap freighter skippered, most exceptionally, by a Korean, and where oddly enough we had ample supplies of sweet fresh Korean water, and after putting in to Tsingtao in a typhoon we took the train at Gensan or Chemulpo with a week's sea journey behind us.

I found it very difficult to know when to get out of trains in Korea, because each place has two names, the old Korean one which persists among the people and the newer Japanese title. Thus on one of my journeys my host had impressed upon me that I must not fail to change trains at Seishin, or I would miss all subsequent connexions. When I did reach it I nearly refused to budge from my seat in spite of the gesticulations of a kindly Korean woman, because the junction was inscribed Yujo.

My destination was a small village in the north eastern corner of Korea called Ompo, actually only ten hours from Vladivostok by rail. Here a sprinkling of White Russians congregated in summer, some having bought land for ultimate retirement, as living is cheap there. Others were, like myself, guests at Novina. Except for these, and a few Japanese in key posts, the population was Korean, indolent, slipshod, dirty, inhabiting a beautiful mountainous land of crystal-clear air and sweet waters, whose every natural resource was exploited and marketed by Japan.

From Ompo, for instance, a single track narrow railway ran up into higher hills, denuding them gradually of pine, oak and birch. Long since, when it was first built, the natives, then more alive to their enslavement and more prone to protest, were promised that their trees would be cut down for ten years only, after which period the railway would be turned over to them for their own use.

Ten years passed, then another ten. After that nobody expected rendition of the railway or cessation of timber cutting any more. The only difference to be seen with the years is that nowadays most of the humbler railwaymen are Korean. Apparently the Japanese do not go in for reafforestation. Everywhere, in fishing, sealing, conquering, their object seems to be to plunder but never to sow for later harvest.

In Ompo, too, were hot radium springs, a potential source of income. But over every spring was built a Japanese hotel, and it was impossible to take the waters without frequenting them. I had to use much ingenuity in my bathing, since, in accordance with Japanese custom, any number of people may use the baths simultaneously, although the sexes are segregated. There is a big tiled tank, enclosed in a sunken room, and in usual Japanese style one was expected to squat on the floor outside and soap oneself all over, swilling the suds off with a dipper; only when this has been done does the immersion take place.

Quite a lot of convalescent soldiers were in Ompo at one of the sanatoria. It was interesting to contrast their beautifully laundered kimonos with their disreputable footgear. They hobbled along in an uncouth selection of heavy rubber goloshes or ancient cracked leather boots. Many preferred to carry theirs and go barefoot. Of course, in China, we had not been allowed to glimpse this shortage of leather.

In spite of other shortages of foodstuffs like rice and flour prices in Korea were startlingly low after Shanghai, pointing clearly to the pitiless stranglehold over commodities in our home port. A good many of Shanghai's foodstuffs were at that time being taken to the Philippines there to be exchanged for American-backed pesos. It was amazing to buy at a railway station dining-room in Korea a three-course luncheon, foreign-style, for fivepence, a quart bottle of beer for a penny, beef and fried potatoes for threepence.

Petrol being short our host had not met our train, and we had thirty miles to go. Up till then my Japanese had kept our little party going, but in this remote corner its use appeared to peter out. Knowing how near we were to Russia, and guessing that the lazy Korean would be more likely to speak Russian as his second language, I begged the two Russian girls in our party to try. . . . But they had depended upon me for so long that they were shy. Finally they went off by themselves and tried it out, to come back beaming; the trick had worked, and they had hired the only taxi in the place to take us to our destination.

That was a stroke of genius. Another Russian, arriving by a later train, had to take a bus some portion of the way, and for the last lap an ox cart; so that she made her appearance at Novina lying fast asleep on top of her luggage, jolting along in a wooden-wheeled vehicle. We cheered her, but the lady was offended at our mirth, and spent the rest of her holidays impressing upon us the information that she was really a princess. Judging by the standards of Hans Andersen, whose tale "The Princess and the Pea" is still fast in my memory, she couldn't have been!

Our host at Novina was the great White Russian hunter Yankovsky. He ran his hunting lodge as a resort only during the summer months when shooting was prohibited. His name was well known up and down the China coast, and especially among the Russian community which nicknamed him "The Uncrowned King of Korea."

Once a wealthy landowner in pre-Revolution Russia, he headed his own independent Imperial army of five hundred men, but was forced to disband them and flee into exile across the border with a handful of officers. The U.S.S.R. stepped in and confiscated his lands and herds.

The exile did not go far. At first he and his four sons took to hunting and trapping for a livelihood, and from the top of one lonely mountain, a favourite hunting centre, he was able to look down on great lands that once were his, herds he had once owned.

Chosen, as the Japanese had renamed it, the Land of Morning Calm, appeared to offer a stranger little scope. Profits from any produce of the soil went into Japanese pockets. Free schooling was being given to the younger Korean generation, and all other forbidden, so that the youngsters should grow up speaking Japanese and inculcated with loyalty to Nippon. The highest jobs went, of course, to Japanese, though gradually a generation of local petty officials would grow up under the yoke.

Yankovsky and his four sons and two daughters learned to speak fluently both tongues of this country of their adoption; Korean, and Japanese. Later, when he could afford it, he sent the children to Shanghai where he had a brother, and where they picked up English, too. Always, though, they thirsted

for the freedom and wild beauty of Korea, where they ran wild and hunted game and bathed in the mountain torrents.

For the one particular line in which their father excelled, so that no Japanese could touch him, was hunting. Quite soon after his arrival his skill had been noised abroad, until finally the Japanese army came to depend upon him as their chief huntsman. He and his clan would set out fully equipped for weeks, with their pack of dogs, in the bitter cold of a Siberian winter, and return laden with lynx, leopard, bear, an occasional tiger, and wild boar. Besides supplying pelts, Yankovsky cured and traded in wild boar ham, and the conqueror's army came to depend upon him and his brood, and extended over them its ironclad protection.

First he built himself a straggling hunting lodge in a fold of hills alongside a brawling torrent, in which his children bathed, though it came from distant snows even in summer; where they invented all sorts of games, such as shooting the chute with their bodies, and where they painstakingly cleared out a large sandy pool, shifting rocks and boulders for the purpose. Nearby was built a solid, strong ice house, cunningly stacked at winter's end and packed from the air so that the ice gathered then might last throughout the summer. Log huts then sprang up here and there as he extended his domain and found himself with employee huntsmen to house, and sometimes a European or American guest coming for the hunting season.

So his power expanded. He built himself a tower in which he lived, and allotted to each of his children a hunting lodge. These compact dwellings were built around a central stove, burning wood, which, when lit, warmed all four rooms. There was neither electricity nor running water, but the torrent ran not far away, and we found volley ball courts, net ball, tennis and other games; we ate wild boar ham and wild bee honey, vegetables and fruit from the orchard, fish from a second domain on the coast which had been added to our host's possessions not long before. We were two miles by cart track from the nearest village, thirty miles from a station. We gathered in the great hall built of logs for our meals; its walls were almost concealed by trophies of every kind; branching horns, skulls, pelts, photographs of rugged men in shaggy skins against a background of snow.

These photographs used to fascinate me. The early ones showed Yankovsky as tall and lithe and outstandingly handsome, with the keen, far-seeing eyes of a hunter and a certain look of nobility which he never lost. Usually he would have dogs or horses about him. His tales fascinated me still more, whenever we could induce him to tell them. Sixty-two as he then was, he was still in perfect condition and lean with exercise and hard living. As he yarned you could divine the close bond that knit the five men together; he would tell how Sasha the youngest had saved his life with a steady shot under particularly dangerous circumstances; Valery, the eldest son, would cap his father's story with another showing the old man's deadly marksmanship, when two sons were cornered by three bears and he had only three cartridges left.

Sometimes Largo, the black leader dog of the pack, came in for his share. In the hunting season this animal set off alone to mark down a quarry, and stole back silently to summon his masters for a kill. His reward was always the liver. But according to Arseny, Largo, on a recent occasion, had been at fault; age perhaps was taking its toll. The hunters, ignoring his attempts to lead them in the wrong direction, guided by the yelps of the other dogs, made their kill, but could not induce Largo to accept the liver. Arseny kept it for him, but that evening he refused it again. Largo, it seems, was a just dog, and would not accept unearned rewards.

The first visit of Yankovsky's eighty summer guests was, of necessity, to the police station at Ompo. Here, escorted by one of the hunter sons as interpreter,

we each spent a long session, never less than three hours in length, answering innumerable questions and finally writing out a sort of autobiography which we signed and left behind us. What is more, though the weather was hot, no woman was allowed to grace the sacred precincts of the police station with back or knees exposed. So we discarded backless sunsuits and shorts for expeditions to the village, though when we passed through, slatternly Korean women with bare breasts hanging did their chores in the street, and men wearing only ragged pants drove bullocks and scattered mangy dogs.

Naturally, finding we were expected to write down every detail of our lives, we all wielded the red pencil freely in order to finish sooner. We were supposed, for instance, to put down every address we had ever lived at in our lives, anywhere! Never have there been so many innocuous stories spun as at the tiny police station of Ompo, interpreted into fluent Korean or Japanese by an inwardly chafing young huntsman.

These police officials get low pay and are only half-educated. One of our visitors was Dutch. "From Hoirando," translated Iura. "Horrando?" Our little official had never heard of the place, and waited for an explanation, with pen poised. We had to get a small school atlas and point out to him the position of Holland, but until he verified the name in the index he would not accept our word for the existence of such a country.

A favourite trick of Korean officials, once they have discharged their duty by exhaustively examining everyone at the beginning, is to invite themselves unexpectedly to lunch, bringing along a few friends. One Shanghai lady, a German, who has a summer bungalow in the district, and makes good raspberry jam from her own canes—a great luxury in the East where you scarcely ever see raspberries—found her pet policeman, after his first trial, turning up not only for frequent teas, but with a tin canister, so that he could take a supply of the jam away with him.

She was a very sweet and gentle lady. Not at all Nazi in her sympathies, as many were not who had lived most of their lives in the Far East. I remember that, while her son, in Europe, had been caught up in the turmoil and was presumably fighting against the British, she would invite me to tea, and lend me books. Another German couple stayed for a while at Novina, and he would say to me: "You lend me your English newspapers from Shanghai and I'll lend you my German ones; between us we'll get a good idea of the truth. Your papers will be about 75 per cent accurate and mine about 25 per cent." I laughed and thought to myself that he was a pretty shrewd old bird.

Yankovsky had, among his many possessions, a deer park, but its *raison d'être* would scarcely appeal to westerners. Among Chinese and Koreans alike deer horn, ground up, is counted a priceless aphrodisiac; a rejuvenating medicine of the highest quality. So the budding prong is cut and the warm blood spurting from the wound is sold to any purchaser at twenty yen a draught.

I saw a handsome middle-aged Korean guest, a nice, quiet fellow, return from such a libation shouting in frenzied ecstasy, with his shirt-front splashed and a look of wild jubilation on his face. It made me feel "sick to my stomach," but to him it spelt many sons to worship at the family altar after he had passed on.

Language had its pitfalls, too, in that remote region. Once we guests were instructed, at a nearby township visited by bus, to buy for our host a volley ball net. "What is it in Japanese?" I asked. "Oh, you don't use Japanese, ask for it in English." Then, as we pressed him, he admitted that the English version (*à la japonaise*) of volley ball net was *Barru borri nettu*. He couldn't make out why we laughed. To him it was perfectly simple.

One day a Korean peasant told Yankovsky that a wild boar had ravaged crops four miles up the slopes during the night. There was no excitement; the hunter took down a rifle, pocketed some ammunition and went off at a



lope. I am many years younger than he, but it was all I could do to keep pace with him. Over streams, through thickets, up and up with his long tireless stride he went, and gave his expert attention to the tracks. "It is most unusual for wild boar to come so low in summer," he said, "but this one has gone up into the mountains again. We shall have to go after him, or all the farmers' crops will be ruined." In this way I saw that my host had shouldered the responsibilities as well as the advantages of his kingship.

He would hire his great log hall out for functions sometimes, so that we saw a Korean wedding there. Most of its accessories were of paper, the bride's bouquet, the groom's white camellia buttonhole, the flower-girls' flowers and headdresses, the orange blossoms and even the white carpet carefully unrolled and drawing-pinned down the "aisle" before the ceremony. This, for Korea, was to be a really up-to-date foreign-style affair; for white is the native colour of mourning.

The groom had four male attendants who wore white cotton gloves, hired ill-fitting suits and tall hats. They walked like mutes at a funeral with eyes glued to their feet single-stepping up the paper carpet. The bridegroom's socks were shabby and wrinkled and his leather shoes unpolished. The figure of the shrinking little bride's dowry, 2,600 yen, was pasted up in large figures for all the world to admire.

With characteristic Korean lackadaisicalness nobody had arranged for a pianist, so Yankovsky's sister-in-law, whose husband was an officer in Shanghai's Frenchtown police, obliged with the Wedding March. At the end of the ceremony, with some presence of mind, she plunged into Home Sweet Home. Somebody had hastily stuck a handful of marigolds into a tumbler and a clean tablecloth flung over one of the luncheon tables made an adequate "altar."

A few days later tragedy, in the shape of a cable from Shanghai, came to the Yankovsky family. The brother in Frenchtown's police had been called to his door during his wife's absence and shot by gunmen who had been unable to obtain his connivance in some unlawful racket.

So, four days after she had played the wedding march, the widow was kneeling in Yankovsky's estate chapel, a candle in her hand slowly burning down like a human life, and around her, overflowing out of the building on to the terrace outside, we too knelt, while beautiful Russian voices rose and fell in a requiem. . . . I did not understand a word, but my candle shook in my hand, and tears rolled down my cheeks at the pitiful waste of mortal endeavour, the callousness which had widowed her and orphaned her children.

Over his stone tower Yankovsky flew the Russian Imperial flag in lone, outmoded loyalty. If the long-awaited war breaks out between Russia and Japan he will have to choose which side has a claim to his invaluable knowledge. Once before, as a young man, he gambled his rich heritage and lost; for the sake of fealty to a lost cause. Will he play safe this time, to preserve the little "empire" he has carved out?

I don't think so. This man behind whose steely gaze lie memories of his old feudal estate across the border, who has steadfastly flown not the Japanese but the Russian Czarist standard, will never prove a traitor to the land that bred him. On that day he will take his hunting equipment and, with those of his sons who are closest, steal away by secret paths to place his knowledge at the service of the nation which disinherited him.

It was during my stay in Korea that Jimmie Cox was arrested along with other journalists in territory under Japanese control, and that I read in a little local paper of his death. There was a facsimile of his farewell note to his wife, "I know what is best. . . ."

The thing hit hard. As I saw it, it was a genuine suicide. Jimmie had always been fastidious; and a Japanese jail must be about the worst in creation.

I recalled the stories he had told me about prisons in Japan; the small pulse I had noticed once or twice beating in his temple while outwardly he was the bland, courteous, smiling Jimmie everybody knew and liked. Jimmie the imperturbable, facing up to a job that required infinite patience, tenacity and guile. And when they manufactured against him, days afterwards, accusations of spying, I recalled how he had told me, with a twist of humour, that he had purposely chosen an office in the same building as the police so that they could have full access to his documents every evening as soon as he left.

I have never believed the Japanese killed him, because his death was a tremendous blow to Japanese prestige. Jimmie made the headlines in death as, being a cog in Reuter's wheels, he had never made them in life. His suicide was a challenge; focused world attention on Tokio and its highhanded methods against foreigners in its midst. And so Tokio fussed around and produced "evidence," after the event, designed to justify its methods. But soon afterwards, the other persons arrested were set free.

A certain proportion of my journey back was made overland. I remember at one of the stations a bright poster depicting the righteousness of Japan's cause in China lest anyone should question it. In the foreground a chubby Chinese child waving aloft two flags; in the left hand the standard of puppet China, in the right the flashy red sun of Nippon. Across the middle ground paced a procession of Chinese peasant and industrial workers, implements on shoulder, while gigantic in the background, somewhat misty but dominating the poster, tramped ranks of helmeted Japanese conquerors. Slavery epitomised in a railway poster! Strange how the Japs fail in psychology!

Thirty odd years ago that same poster could have served for Korea, subdued and about to enter the ranks of Nippon's underlings. Yet somehow I could not imagine our friends the Chinese ever degenerating as the Koreans have, ever losing their innate air of race and dignity. Still, among country folk in Korea you may see a wise old face which recalls a similar visage at the door of some stone house in Cathay, and there is something wistful in the pure oval of a young Korean girl's countenance, as though she yearns towards some future unclouded by oppression.

During the train journey through Korea and a part of Manchukuo I was being pestered night and day to produce my passport and answer questions, though my interlocutors knew no single word of English. I decided at the outset not to know any Japanese, as that simplified matters. On the last night I tipped my Korean sleeping berth attendant and chuckled to myself when I heard him refuse access to one of the ubiquitous "inspectors" on the ground that I was asleep.

All along the line strode fields of sturdy white poppies, in graceful contrast to the jade of low young rice fields and the grape-bloom of pine-clad slopes. These beautifully tended blooms and full pods were a pleasing sight until their portent began to oppress the imagination. Poppies, ah! yes! of course, opium! To harvest and smuggle abroad for good American gold, to enslave the pliable and intelligent Chinese who had begun to put this curse from them under the New Deal movement, to coin wealth through the degradation of others. So that I gazed upon those flaunting poppies with bitter eyes, as a hallmark of Nippon's New Order.

During this train journey I was interested to hear how officials in Korea translate Japan's idea of one free day per week for each employee. An irate Russian traveller told me she had been forcibly detained at one junction and had to stay overnight at a filthy inn although her train was at the station and her passport in order. Nobody could explain anything to her; she was merely denied permission to board the train, and hustled off to the native hostelry.

Next morning, all smiles, someone escorted her to the station. Here a passport official who spoke Russian hailed her and said, "Passport, please." "Why did I have to spend the night in this god-forsaken hole?" she demanded. He bowed. "Because, Madam, nobody was on duty at the station to inspect passports. It was my rest day."

## CHAPTER XIV

### GANGSTER RULE: HAYASHI

I RETURNED to Shanghai with my mind made up. Korea had been testimony—if any was needed—of the insatiable acquisitiveness of Japan, and of that country's refusal to accept the ordinary responsibilities of conquest. I had witnessed a sad, degraded race toiling without pride or hope on land whose first fruits went to aliens.

White men had lost face in the Orient because they had not stood up to Japan in the early stages of her aggression on China. At the blockade of Tientsin white women had been offensively handled on the pretext of searching them for hidden ammunition, white men had had worse indignities thrust upon them, while yellow men stood and watched. Sooner or later Shanghai and Hongkong were bound to go; whether by blockade or by direct assault none could foresee. As a writer, unless I had good warning and could burn all my papers, I stood a low chance of good treatment. In no case would I ever willingly become a prisoner of war of Japan.

Various recollections flitted through my mind, and though none of them was pleasant, I was extremely loath to go. . . . How when I first came out as a griffin in 1926 Chinese bandits had been my horror; their ruthlessness had sent shivers down my spine. We had been grateful then to our Volunteers because they were there to protect us from Chinese aggression; from sudden attempts to seize the rich port which had grown up alongside the Chinese city and which, thanks to the enterprise and public spirit of foreigners, had eclipsed it.

In course of time, it is true, we had most of us come to like the Chinese, and to appreciate his good points; perhaps, I thought, he is of those whose qualities show up best under adversity. But to expect him ever to discard his system of squeeze was childish. In that at least Kipling was justified when he said, "never the twain shall meet." And perhaps the educated Chinese who had been able to study the white man's system at first hand had no great reason to prefer it to his own anyway. . . . I thought of Horatio Bottomley, and of Chicago gangsters, of bootlegging and hijacking.

Should China then be left to fulfil her own destiny? To fall into banditry and civil war, floods and famines? There would still be, after the defeat of Japan, the question of Communist armies in China to be settled. Perhaps, with an era of peace, General Chiang Kai Shek would have time to solve this problem his own way, not by war as he tried for so many years in vain, but by the method most suitable to Chinese mentality: compromise.

Sooner or later some foreign power would have to fight for and with China to extricate her, since all her vital avenues to trade were closed, and without trade she could not buy weapons of war. Exasperating to realise that, when foreigners toiled and sweated to make tanks, guns and ammunition for Cathay, she herself would dissipate a certain quantity of this produce in civil war and banditry. Even the Burmah Road which was such a source of newspaper contention had never served the full purpose owing to squeeze and robbery by Chinese themselves while the goods were still in transit. I thought of the

foreigners highly placed in Customs, Posts and Telegraphs, Salt Gabelle and Railways, to ensure their honest administration. The leopard does not change his spots, nor the son of Cathay his essential characteristics. Give him a business to manage; he will be expected to provide by its means jobs for all his close relatives irrespective of their unsuitability.

Yet the systems of China were understood and accepted by the white man living there. He could trade with Chinese merchants because, no matter how or whom they squeezed, their word was their bond and a contract once agreed upon, whether in writing or not, was honoured. Moreover, courtesy was always extended to a recognised customer.

But in dealing with Japan things were very different. It was Nippon who taught the Chinese to dilute their silk with rayon. Greed in Japan transcended honesty. When the Japanese fished they depleted the fishing grounds and tried to bully Russia into allowing them further concessions. All along this greed had guided and was guiding the hand of Nippon. Immediate profits on all their investments with no thought for future reconstruction characterised their every move. They did not even try to conciliate their vanquished peoples.

Stray bits of conversation flitted into my mind. The Japanese Christians who had told friends of mine with horror how they had overheard, in a restaurant, their own soldiers discussing murder and rape as though it were a jest. "I tell you," one said, full of Asahi beer, "old women are easier to kill than chickens. A chicken is a slippery, tough little customer. But old Chinese women—they just let out a squawk or two, then they go dead under you."

The Chinese we had seen thrown by Jap soldiers into the muddy creek one winter's day, and who had floundered to shore, only to be thrust in again and again by bayonets until at last, tiring of their sport, the soldiers shot him and let his body float down the tide. "Why did you do that?" we foreigners, helpless spectators, had asked. The Jap who spoke English had made a lewd gesture. "He would not work for us," he explained, simply.

And so, either because of fear or because no other employment offered, all up and down the coasts millions of Chinese were working for Japanese overlords, a large number as puppet soldiers. Remember what General Gordon said about the Chinese soldier? So good is he when well drilled and paid and fed that I notice several have been among enemy troops captured in New Guinea. To the Australian and American soldiers fighting them I expect Chinese and Japs are so much alike as to be indistinguishable, but to us who lived amongst them the faces and forms are unmistakable.

When I returned to my Outside Road in Shanghai after the summer holidays it was to find an even greater number of puppet gatekeepers strutting outside their domains and flourishing outsize pistols at all and sundry. Indeed, I had the matter brought to my attention rather forcibly, for the mansion behind my flat had changed hands while I was away and I did not know it. Wishing to have a film developed on which was a photo of the Korean bride at Novina, I decided to use up the last couple of pictures on our Chinese gateman and present them to him afterwards. When I went downstairs to do this I found at the gate, not the country man I had known for years, but a stranger. "Anyway," I thought, "any Chinese likes to have his photo taken for nothing, here goes."

The next thing I knew was that an iron hand gripped me and two grim-faced men were hauling me inside the gate. One snatched at my precious camera, but I hung on to it and resisted as best I could while the puppets propelled me along with kicks and jerks until they had me out of public view behind the great mansion their new masters were occupying.

Here they shoved me into a watchman's hut and shut the door by means of a flimsy lock. Suddenly bethinking myself of bugs and consequent typhus I stuck my foot through the window and burst the double door open, emerging

with a grin. Throughout I kept on my face the obvious expression adopted by someone who considers the whole affair a joke, as I knew I was only inviting trouble if I appeared frightened.

The same heavy pistol as before was now thrust against my ribs and, as I did not appear to notice it, presented for my inspection. I admired it, saying two of the only northern Chinese words I know (Mandarin Chinese is said to be understood by most, though Shanghai dialect is entirely different) "Ding Hao" was my comment, that is to say, "Very good." I don't think they quite appreciated my admiration of the weapon. I had been meant to shrink back and squeal for mercy. Instead here was the fool of a foreigner admiring the bally thing and too stupid to realise it was threatening her.

Well, they kept me there the better part of an hour, and every now and then gestured that I should take out the film from my camera and give it to them. At last out came someone in authority, though he was only some kind of a clerk, and he spoke English. I told him I had not had time to take a photo at all, as the men had laid hold on me just as I got the camera focused, that I did not want to remove the film as it had not yet been used and exposures to the air would spoil it, and a new one cost twelve dollars. This last touch I was very proud of, because it was the sort of thing which would appeal to Chinese. . . . A waste of twelve dollars, well, to be sure. . . . My resistance was quite *understandable*!

They let me go at last, bruised but with the camera intact, and when I reported the matter to the Consulate I realised by the apathy displayed that I was only being a nuisance. Pointedly I was reminded that whatever happened was on Outside territory, over which the Consul had no jurisdiction. Well, so was the school, in which I taught, and the big Boys' school, and the Fire Station; so were the American Columbia Country Club, the Council's largest remaining park, our Tommies' camps, and so on. . . .

Soon after, public attention was to be drawn in no uncertain manner to outlawry in the outlying roads. Mayor Fu, one of the Chinese bigwigs who had gone over to the Japs and was in consequence guarded night and day, was quietly and efficiently assassinated in bed, and the murderer, a coolie who had been in his employ for twelve years, walked calmly out of the gate and disappeared before anyone had discovered what had occurred.

He had been knifed in the very room where his wife lay sleeping, and his removal was a smashing loss of face to the Japanese, inasmuch as he lived in Hongkew. His murderer, well rewarded, will probably retire to his ancestral lands, where he will pass a wealthy and respected old age.

The next assassination followed closely on the heels of the first. A Japanese gendarme, patrolling the Outside Road area, on turning round at a call, was shot in the head. Actually the shooting took place about two hundred yards from a Municipal road, but immediately the Japs barricaded the road and, with cocked pistols, began to search every native passenger travelling on our buses and trams.

We foreigners would sit tight, disdaining to get out at the bidding of a gun, and there was no attempt to search us. But inwardly we cursed at the long wait in a queue of vehicles all held up, and most of us came to believe that the real intention behind that barricade was to dislocate our transport system and pave the way for a Japanese substitute. The bus company, a British concern, and the trams, however, doggedly held on and would not acknowledge defeat.

Meanwhile the actual scene of the shooting had been cordoned off, and over six hundred people almost starved because they were not allowed to leave. Towards the end of this particular blockade puppet Chinese soldiers called at every house and forced the inhabitants to buy at extortionate rates, a replica of the "new" Chinese flag, which they had to display.

The reader should understand that these puppets are not tame patriots willing to turn their coats again at a favourable moment. Many of them are jailbirds and worse. All the time of their puppethood they batten greedily on their own people, backed by the menace of Japanese ammunition and stolen guns. As evening fell over Yu Yuen Road every alley leading into Outside territory would acquire its clop of gunmen, arrogant in leather boots and new uniforms. Every now and then, when some private feud of their own required liquidation, they would "arrest" some poor unfortunate and drag him shrieking into oblivion.

I remember that autumn people residing just off the road telephoned Bubbling Well police that armed robbers were operating in the house next door. Our legitimate police arrived smartly, arrested one robber and freed the other on a loof. At which juncture Japanese and puppet gendarmes (who had apparently accepted squeeze in advance to allow the robbery) came running, arrested our police for functioning away from the road, and released their prisoners. The thieves made away with their loot, but our men were detained for two hours.

Among the various demands for "protection tax" received, there was one soft-spoken Chinese who claimed to represent the local bag-snatchers' guild. Two dollars per month per person, he said, would ensure immunity from the gang's attentions. So the householders paid up. Six weeks later they complained bitterly, for Missie had lost her bag at the point of a pistol not twelve yards from the house. So when Mister Bag Snatcher called for his instalment he was resolutely tackled. He shrugged the incident away. "It must have been a rival gang, operating without licence in my territory," he said. So then the victims began to wonder whether he was a robber at all, or only a smarty who had thought out a new system of getting rich!

Hongkong had evacuated its women and children, except for some who stayed on for more than they had bargained for. . . . American women and children left Shanghai, and our Consul insisted that we British women should go too. "The Japanese will drive you foreigners out, and after that we Chinese will come back and drive the Japanese back to their land East of the Ocean," this was the burden of many Chinese thoughts at the time. How, by what miracle they were to succeed without foreign help, did not appear to trouble them.

Meanwhile squeeze and graft, plot and counterplot went on. From the humblest coolie who, to fill the rice bowls of an increased number of his relatives, robbed his Master and Missie, to the wealthiest merchant who, finding business circumscribed by the Japanese, invested his money in grandiose gambling and dope emporia, corruption was undermining the national life and character of Chinese in occupied areas to an alarming extent. Homes were burgled, the proceeds were hijacked off the thieves before they had time to decamp with them, cross and double-cross, and then a pistol barking in some dark alley spelling revenge.

The latest game that last winter of my stay in Shanghai was "frog-skinning." This consisted of stripping the victim of every warm garment, and allowing him or her to shiver or slink home afterwards! I must own that though I often foresaw myself returning without my handbag, my worst fears always clung to this frog-skinning business. I could never have lived down the indignity of being seen by my pupils returning in brief silk undies through the streets of Shanghai! Fortunately, I escaped.

One Chinese held up in crowded Nanking Road had the presence of mind to say, "Look here, I've only five dollars; let me go over to that change shop and get forty cents bus money to take me home before I give you the balance." "No fear, you can't slip us like that. We'll give you the forty cents, here it is;

now hand over that five dollars." And the gunmen, in the true spirit of compromise, tendered him the small change and made off, never suspecting, so bland had been his bluff, that in an inside pocket reposed five hundred dollars.

Coal was a commodity worth plenty of money, and therefore when Missie's back was turned, a sackful would be "sold" to some outsider by her house coohe. One ingenious trick played on a kind employer was checkmated by an Eurasian friend called in for consultation.

"Look here, Brown," said his friend, "every month I send Lee out to pay a few little bills for me; not more than about three hundred dollars altogether. But two months ago not long after I'd sent him out he came back with a long face and told me he'd had his pocket picked in the bus. Last month nothing happened, now this month he says he was held up at the corner of Avenue Road. I'm beginning to believe the thing's a fake, though Lee's been with us for eleven years and his wife's our amah and he's always been honest. You understand these people better than I do, tell me how I'd better tackle him."

Brown, a wise old bird, gave his advice. "Pay your small bills by cheque or send your office chit-coolie out. That's the first thing. Second, don't lend Lee anything no matter what he says. And lastly, send for me when something happens, and I assure you, something will."

Something did. Two months passed and Lee was beginning to need money. Master hadn't sent him out to pay any more bills, his bedding was all pawned against gambling debts, next his overcoat would have to go . . . and the weather was still bitter. So he came apologetically into Master's presence. "Master, please you can lend me three hundred dollars?"

Master wryly noted the figure; almost the exact amount per month Lee had been "losing." He looked up. "Sorry, Lee; 'fraid I can't. No got."

Lee stood taken aback; Master wasn't usually so curt. Always so easy going, these foreigners. He stood his ground just inside the door, expecting Master to say, "Well, Lee?" But Master went on smoking and after awhile Lee withdrew, with considerable loss of face.

He tried Missie next, but there also drew a blank. So in his guile knowing Brown the Eurasian to be the most intimate family friend Lee appeared before him with a hard luck story . . . quite a good yarn in its way, of a large, starving family at a village in the interior recently burnt down by the Japanese in reprisal for guerrilla activity in its neighbourhood. There may even have been foundation in fact. But Brown knew that gambling house in the Pao Chi alleyway, had seen Lee turn into it once or twice, so he gave scant heed.

"Sorry, Lee; you're not my servant," he replied in Chinese, "you'd better ask your master."

Lee wished to avoid further loss of face so did not say Master had already refused. "But these people to whom I have promised money will take me away if I don't pay," he said. "Indeed, they must be very bad men," commented Brown absently, going on with his book.

Lee, checkmated, withdrew. A couple of days later his wife, the wash-amah, appeared at breakfast with convulsed features. "Master, Missie," she gasped, "my husband no got. Bad man takee he away."

Her foreign employers went on eating unconcernedly, for they had been forewarned by Brown. "Oh, well, amah, byembye come back," quoth Missie soothingly. "But Missie, this man wantchee money!"

There was no response. Master and Missie were eating eggs and bacon. The plot wasn't working.

So once more Brown was tackled, in true Chinese style as intermediary, this time by the amah. "Well, well, well," he said, rising, when he has listened

to her tale of abduction and the three hundred dollars required to liquidate the matter. "You'd better come along with me."

"Go bank, Master?"

"Bank? What for? No! Go Police Station. These men are kidnappers, we have to report to the Police. Then you can tell them where to get into touch with them, and——"

"But I don't know!"

"Of course you do. You just told me you did. Just a minute and I'll get my coat."

But when Brown pretended to get his coat the amah vanished, as he had known she would.

About a week later, Missie having run her house very smoothly in the interim with the help of Coolie and Amah, a subdued voice said at breakfast: "Missie, Boy outside, wantchee see you."

"Boy? What Boy?" Missie's eyes were guileless. "Oooh, yes, you mean Lee. . . . Well, what's he outside for?"

"Missie, he wantchee come back work." The words rushed out.

"Oh, amah . . . I don't know whether I really want him any more. We've been getting along very nicely with just you and Coolie."

Silence. Amah couldn't believe her ears. At last: "I go catchee he come inside, Missie?" she ventured.

"No, Amah. S'pose I wantchee he come back, I call he byembye."

So the story ended with Lee still awaiting, with chastened and humble heart, Master and Missie's pleasure to summon him back to his old job; his put-up kidnapping stunt having failed.

Of course, it must be clearly understood that the Jap squeezes just as hard as the Chinese. Indeed, to a westerner the fact that even the highest does so is almost unbelievable. I'll quote one instance, concerning a Nipponese Admiral of the Fleet.

A friend of mine whom we will call Mr. Smith, was employed as Foreign Accountant of a so-called American firm; that is, actually Chinese, but registered under the American flag. A foreign accountant was employed partly to ensure integrity, partly to bolster their claim to be a foreign firm.

A huge godown full of machinery had been for a considerable time Smith's greatest worry. Destined for the interior of China via Wenchow, the Japanese blockade had postponed its shipment, and freight quotations to Burmah by foreign ship, and then north over the Burmah Road (with the requisite squeeze to see it through that expensive thoroughfare) were altogether prohibitive. So the cargo destined for Free China remained in the godown.

One fine day Smith opened the godown door to find the warehouse empty. "Hey, Chang, Lu!" he called, "What's this?"

One of the Chinese came up and pacified him. "All right, Mr. Smith, you do not worry, please. The cargo is not stolen. It has been shipped to Wenchow as at first arranged."

"But Wenchow's blockaded."

"Yes, Mr. Smith, I know. But four or five Chinese merchants along with Wong who owned the machinery, all had stuff to ship into the Interior, and it was too dear via Burmah; so they got a ship, and made an arrangement among themselves. Then they sent an intermediary to the Japanese Admiral outside Wenchow, with a cheque for two million dollars."

The explanation had apparently come to an end. Smith blinked. Impatient with this foreign devil whose mind worked so slowly, the Chinese dotted his i's and crossed his t's for him.



"The Japanese admiral went off with his fleet on a week's manœuvres," he said, "and the goods sailed in."

On the day Japan decided to recognise its own puppet government in Nanking a Chinese gunman shot a Jap corporal in one of our Outside Roads. From the first there was a persistent rumour that this was really a gambling den revenge, but as if it had provided them with a useful excuse the Japanese military and their satellite Chinese immediately threw a cordon around the district comprising three square miles and blockaded it.

At the time of the killing, incidentally, the victim's companion spraying the vicinity with a Tommy gun, killed an innocent shoemaker as he sat at his portable wayside stall, but no one even troubled to mention this fact in newspaper reports: one of Shanghai's little lessons in values.

The area blockaded was thickly populated, and for the first three days most people caught in the blockade could get neither in nor out. Those who had come there on business or pleasure had to pass nights in other peoples' homes. Even the phone let everyone down in the end because one of the exchanges was in the area and the shift of operators marooned at their posts struck at last, so no explanatory calls could be put through, either from employees to employer or vice versa.

One Chinese young woman teacher will never again, I think, go back on a Saturday afternoon to correct books. For she was caught in the school building for three days and nights, and when she called upon acquaintances to help her persuade her puppet guard to let her out the latter bargained until he had mulcted his victim of forty dollars in bribes, and then arrested her for "attempted bribery," brought her before his Japanese superiors, and looked on with satisfaction while they "fined" her one hundred dollars. She was then taken back to the blockaded school where she spent the ensuing three days without bed or board . . . The reader should remember that the policeman guilty of this choice bit of chicanery was also a Chinese, acting against his own compatriot.

In an area of the size encircled there was, of course, quite a lot of successful bribery; only in certain cases the escapee returned rather late to find that his particular sentry had been relieved, and that, to get back, he had to start bribing all over again. In the presence of Japanese I don't imagine any squeeze was either openly given or accepted, though I saw them on one occasion concentrating so hard upon examining passengers in a car (provided with some special pass) that three Chinese slid past the barrier while their backs were turned.

On the third day matters came to a head because the schools for foreign children, most of which were situated in the zone shut off, were to have held their annual School Certificate examination, set and marked in London; a truly solemn and auspicious occasion. Moreover the dates and time set had to be adhered to, lest pupils in Hongkong cable questions to our scholars, or vice versa. In vain did eager students besiege various barriers in their efforts to get in, they were motioned threateningly away and pilgrimaged from barrier to barrier begging to be let in.

When finally special arrangements were made to let teachers and children alike inside the blockade it was too late to hold examinations, and special dispensation had to be obtained to hold them late. Teachers and pupils were then provided with special passes, and for two weeks alone entered the dead area, where public trams and buses, rickshaws and taxis were excluded, and even hawkers could not function.

When official inquiries were made of the Japanese their sole explanation for the blockade was that "there was a house-to-house investigation going on"

to discover the murderer of their corporal. Extreme rudeness was shown to one English consulate official who attempted to pass the barrier, and a badly-phrased notice stuck up on a board criticising his "behaviour" for all and sundry to read. We began, as the blockade dragged on, to guess that there was something more behind it than just one of Shanghai's usual murders.

Perhaps, we thought, it was a second and more determined attempt to operate buses and trams in opposition to the British company which had the franchise from our Municipal Council. For soon a dilapidated series of Japanese-sponsored buses started to ply in the forbidden area; and the fact leaked out that anyone willing to pay the twenty cents excessive rate charged, could enter and, on displaying his bus ticket, move freely about the zone. Thus, whilst the face of examining teachers' passes was gone through at pistol point and with gruff incivility, the raggedest coolie, on payment of twenty cents, sauntered in and out immune from questioning.

I myself, though I lived in the Badlands, was beyond the area but unfortunately it lay between me and the shopping area, and in the earliest days, before the twenty cents bus service started, newspapermen, milkmen, butchers and bakers shunned us like the plague. So I sallied forth one Sunday morning, when my larder was bare, on a doughty old Singer bike, and by dint of laborious cycling, found my way all around the map to the Seymour Road Market.

On my way home, with a leg of lamb, several cauliflowers, a flapping fish and other equally plebeian objects protruding from my carrier (since Chinese market vendors don't supply paper), I hoped devoutly that my pupils, driving grandly by in their cars on the way to church, would not notice Miss Munday of the Public School, pedalling busily.

That old bicycle, by the way, I bequeathed to a friend and colleague when I left. When Japan walked in and seized the Settlement all cars were commandeered and most sent overseas to Japan. (One of the biggest consignments was sunk by an American submarine.) The cost of bicycles rose and rose, until it eclipsed cars by hundreds per cent. Since there was no petrol anyway, cars could not have been used. But the ubiquitous bicycle! . . . White men bought them and had to carry them up to the twelfth floor if they went visiting, as even chained bikes disappeared if left outside. So I hope some day to hear that the bike I left behind me proved worth its weight in gold.

It came in very handy during the blockade. Whenever the Japs, exercising a perverted sense of humour, flourished revolvers at us and suggested entry by some other barricade, I would collect some pupil who also owned a bike, and together she and I would go scouting. As soon as we found a sentry disposed to let us in, the pupil would scorch back to the waiting throng of girls and pass on the news. Oh, it was a gay life while it lasted.

Meanwhile the Japs claimed to be continuing their investigations into the murder of Corporal Sato. Certainly a reign of terror started in some humble hutments in the area; shots were heard at night, dead bodies were left out for burial; some were reported to have died of starvation, being unable to pay sufficient squeeze to get out for food. It leaked out that the dilapidated buses used by the Japs had been stolen at gunpoint from a trucking agency in Frenchtown.

And then like an explosion, the whole farce was revealed to us one evening by our inimitable radio commentator Carroll Alcott.

"I expect the dwellers in the Outside Roads will be glad to hear that their blockade is going to be lifted to-morrow evening at seven o'clock," he predicted. "And they needn't go round kidding themselves that all this time the Japs who started it have been trying to find the murderer of Corporal Sato. I am in a

position to inform them that it was nothing of the kind which started this blockade or even caused the murder. The whole business has just been a gangsters' quarrel.

"Three big new gambling dens were just scheduled to open in that district, and the proprietors, who had reckoned on paying the usual amount of squeeze before being allowed by Nippon's gendarmerie to operate, found that the Japs had "raised the ante" on them, demanding a cool million dollars.

"The gambling den proprietors resisted, consequence, the blockade. My information is that they have now caved in; the million has been paid over, on condition the district is made accessible again. So, dear people, you can comfort yourselves with the reflection, when to-morrow evening things get back to normal, that the whole shebang was just a nice little bit of hocus pocus, the New Order in East Asia."

Carroll was right, and the blockade ended just as he had predicted. But the Japs thirsted more than ever for his blood.

Somehow, with my coming departure from the city I looked upon as home, observation seemed sharpened and intensified by bitterness. What changes the last four years had brought about! Now bright-kimono'd Japanese women tripped along pavements in their flat-soled zori, and ragged rickshawmen of the conquered race vied for their patronage. Nearby aristocratic-looking Chinese girls, in shimmering brocade gowns, with high-heeled slippers and silk stockings, their hair modishly done in curls high on their heads, dropped largesse into some persistent beggar's bowl, shrinking fastidiously from contact with his typhus-bearing lice. Or, waiting for a bus, stepped aside from the corpse of some destitute refugee which had been lying on the pavement since death overtook it during the night.

In 1937 those same Japanese women would have been torn limb from limb had they shown themselves in the street, and the dainty Chinese girls were desperate refugees alongside the beggar and the wretch whom death had at last relieved from suffering.

And when the double-decker bus stopped, I looked up, and sure enough there in the front row of the upper floor was seated a row of Japs, probably equipped with cameras, riding through our still unoccupied portion of the Settlement, surveying it with an air of advance proprietorship.

Our buses, being British, were more luxurious and better tended and driven than the rattletrap, crowded vehicles of Little Tokyo (where one of their drivers had recently come before the Jap court for his 99th reprimand) and the free portion of Shanghai they traversed presented a more prosperous and orderly sight than Little Tokyo's streets with its "patriotic" processions in which residents were forced to join, its drunken debauched soldiery and the worthless paper currency in use there.

Would I get away in time? I wondered. Six months' notice, handed in on 15th December, meant that I could sail somewhere near the end of June. I had thrown a pension into the discard, but as I told my friends when we discussed it, once Shanghai came under the complete domination of Japan, we could kiss our pensions good-bye anyway. . . .

I would have liked to persuade my friends to leave, too, but it is a difficult thing to say to another, "Throw up your livelihood and take a leap into the unknown because I am convinced Japan is going to take over the Settlement." Who was I that my opinion should have weight? And what would they have said to me in later years had I proved wrong?

No, it was a case of everyone decide for himself. Our own British Consul was repeatedly advising women and children to leave, and Hongkong women

and children had already been evacuated. Our Tommies had at last gone, only the American Marines still hung on; the States, too, were recalling their nationals. In this matter of going my heart warred with my head; for by hook or by crook I swore to return some day.

That spring again the Ratepayers were asked to vote a further increase in rates by 40 per cent, on the same plea as in 1940, namely that the British banks could make no further advances until the administrative body had agreed to do its share by increasing taxation.

Up then rose Hayashi, a typical exponent of the New Order in East Asia. Thin and elderly, with large round glasses, a feverish atom, he had always been a spitfire. Not many years before he had addressed a letter signed in his own blood to the Foreign Ratepayers of Shanghai demanding increased Japanese representation on the Council.

Hayashi had the Japanese ratepayers solidly behind him at the meeting. He and the local Nipponese press had worked them to a pitch of frenzied determination to oppose the luke of 40 per cent, and to offer what they considered an unanswerable alternative.

The Japanese banks, stated Hayashi, were perfectly ready to advance the necessary loan to the Council and thus save ratepayers from this cruel and unnecessary burden. The fact that Shanghai's poverty was directly attributable to Japan's blockade was conveniently ignored.

To appreciate to the full the magnificent offer that the Yokohama Specie Bank should help underwrite Shanghai's finances we only had to recall that bank's treatment of funds seized from Chinese Customs a large portion of which, by the way, was due to Britain in repayment of a past debt. Those millions of dollars had vanished.

Hayashi must have suspected that his proposed amendment would be voted down by the preponderance of ratepayers other than Japanese, so, as an alternative, he and several of his friends came to the meeting with loaded pistols. Our International Police had no right to search Japanese since they, like ourselves, claimed extra-territoriality; but Hayashi's speech, that he felt like a famous Japanese hero, Kusunoki, at Hyogo, was a warning to anyone who knew Japanese history; for Kusunoki first gave battle against overwhelming odds and then committed hara kiri. . . . Japanese history or not, our police were there in force and had their best men on the job, as will be seen.

As soon as Hayashi saw the show of hands and realised defeat he passed across the raised platform and, his hand shaking with rage, fired three shots at Mr. Keswick, our British chairman.

Luckily his aim was bad. Even as he shot his compatriots prepared to storm the raised platform; out came their hidden pistols, and one of our police, Sergeant Richards, though he had a shot ready, took a cool, long view of the situation and decided against plugging the still shaking Hayashi where he stood. Instead, Richards leaped upon him and wrested the pistol from his grasp.

The pandemonium on the platform was indescribable. Mr. Carney, an American Councillor, dodging the bullets which had sped past his face, had gone over backwards in his chair, which promptly hit him a whack over the head. A shower of missiles, chairs, electric torches, legs wrenched from chairs, etc., hailed down upon the luckless Councillors on the platform, and while pugnacious Japs were trying to elbow nearer the scene of action, a greater majority of ratepayers, unarmed, were elbowing their way out of the scrimmage. Major Bourne, our Police Commissioner, had himself stemmed most of the rush to the platform until reinforcements rushed up; Hayashi's pals had found

the situation too confused to be able to use their weapons with any effect, especially when they had noted that one of Hayashi's wild shots had got his own compatriot, Matsuoka, in the hand.

An amusing sidelight, and typical of the international co-operation fostered by living in Shanghai, was cast upon proceedings by the story afterwards of Tombs, a British photographer. He and a Japanese newspaperman were both taking pictures of the meeting, and tried too for snaps of the *melée*, but both were bowled over and hurt in the ensuing scrimmage. The Jap got to his feet first, stuck to his colleague, true to newspaper tradition, warding off Japanese blows aimed at him, and helped him get out.

Keswick was adroitly smuggled out by a hole hastily made in the matting at the rear of the platform into an ambulance (he was only slightly wounded); this in itself was a remarkable feat, and somebody, fifteen minutes later, realising that the proprieties must be observed at all costs, stepped up to the microphone and announced that "the meeting was convened until a later date!"

It was indeed.

## CHAPTER XV

"TOUT PASSE, TOUT CASSE, TOUT LASSE——"

To watch the slow death-agony through internal disintegration of a once proud city is sadder in some ways than to see it go down fighting in a blaze of glory, as were some towns at home. Fifteen years before, upon arrival, I had undertaken the difficult business of sloughing off my British insularity in an attempt to achieve an international outlook. No longer to ask, "What nation bred him?" but "What manner of man is this?"—was the ideal.

Not that one ever completely attains the ideal. . . . In Shanghai, however, in 1926, a cosmopolitan crowd rubbed shoulders cheerfully. Germans, beginning to stage a comeback in trade, were given a fair field by their ex-enemies the British. During the 1914 war they had been cleaned out of Shanghai and their property confiscated. As Hitler rose to power the younger generation of Germans were gradually brought into the German Nazi net, forced to attend rallies under threat of reprisal upon relatives still in Germany, or given to understand that all employment in the Reich would be forever closed to them if they did not accept its teachings. Of late, the great German School had witnessed Nazi drillings and propaganda, showing that yet another nation besides the Japanese had stepped out of line and would like to brush aside the internationality of Shanghai.

In this matter of international understanding which I had always striven for, the essential, of course, was to learn aright the oriental character; that mighty back-drop against which our shifting fortunes must be played out. This for fifteen years I had attempted to do, only to find during the last four that the clear-cut picture I had at last gained was slipping out of focus.

The Japanese, quaint but polite marionettes with officious but on the whole harmless curiosity, had gradually become distorted into shabby, strutting bullies, whose lack of psychology and organisation had made an unbelievable muddle of a victorious war. And the Chinese, whose pluck and endurance I had so admired, were everywhere trimming their sails to the wind, accepting the yoke; shooting down their fellow-Chinese when ordered. This, of course, because the keynote of their character was compromise; under temporary

slavery lived the conviction that time would ultimately enable them to absorb their conquerors.

Intimidation went on against those employees in government service who had remained loyal to Chungking, or rather to their jobs which chance ordained should be under a government long since departed. Because free Shanghai still used Chinese government currency a determined attempt was made to force worthless military yen across the counters of Chinese banks in return for the accepted dollar Mex. with foreign backing.

Dormitories of luckless bank-clerks were invaded and the inmates either murdered in their beds or kidnapped en bloc, over a hundred at a time, and held incommunicado. Time bombs were delivered in little innocent-seeming parcels to managers and wrecked buildings and killed bystanders. In return the Chinese bombed one opposition bank and a Japanese cinema and shot a few officials. For a week the Chinese banks remained closed, then they reopened, guarded night and day by our police, and every customer perforce had to be searched as he entered.

Shanghai also faced a grave economic problem in the high price of foodstuffs taxed heavily ere they reached our four million. Strike after strike in public utilities, fostered by Japan, shot up the price of transport; coal had been commandeered to such an extent by Japanese military that gas and electricity supplies had to be curtailed in factories. This created more unemployment still.

Stark poverty was already sufficiently rampant. Walking along Bubbling Well Road I saw a band of eighty ragged vagabonds, women and children, barefoot, roving. Two burly Sikh police loomed up and chased them into a side road.

"Where were they going?" I asked.

"These people hungry; going looking for rich shop or rice hong. Then all together breaking window and stealing and running away," he elucidated.

Disintegration, linked with victory; that was the sum total of Japanese achievement. It is scarcely to be wondered at that we watchers on the side lines miscalculated Japan's strength, for we had in front of our very eyes the exact sum of that country's achievements in four years. Comparing the Sino-Japanese campaign with our own in East Africa, just then brought to a successful conclusion, how could we but consider the Jap an indifferent soldier, indifferently equipped?

The extent of terrain covered was about equal. But whereas Nippon had operated against an army ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-equipped, over easy country, and had lived off the country as she proceeded, occupying only the roads, waterways and railways, our Imperial Army of the Nile had functioned under geographical conditions a hundred times worse, trailed their own supplies with them, fought against a well-found foe, and completed the job in about five months. Japan had taken four years.

Presumably she used obsolete equipment wherever it came under foreign observation, while toughening up her soldiers; for we were fooled, most of us, into thinking her much less powerful than she actually was. Also, her showing against the Russians at Nomanhan and Changkuofeng had not been outstanding. Nevertheless it was made clear by boastful speeches of her statesmen that she aimed at the complete domination of the western Pacific, and we all realised that German raiders functioning in that ocean must be obtaining supplies from Japan.

One day the *Ramses*, a German freighter tied up and immobilised in the Whangpoo since the outbreak of war in Europe, slipped her moorings and

steamed down the Whangpoo to where, just beyond the limits of territorial waters, British gunboats lay in wait for her.

But they did not capture the *Ramses*. At the estuary there closed in around her an escort of Japanese destroyers, which convoyed her clear across to Japan, while our Jack Tars gnashed their teeth.

Also, there came via Siberia from Germany two squadrons of heavy bombers, along with three hundred experts to train Japanese parachutists. To fuel these bombers Japan pirated a launch full of Socony gasoline from the Whangpoo, and we Shanghaianders had the pleasure of watching the machines flown over our Settlement.

Ere I left, Shanghai tittle-tattle was enlivened with the tale of a gorgeous and bloody clash between American Marines and Italian soldiers in a night cabaret where both parties met on pleasure intent.

Seeing only three Marines, a party of over twenty Italians deliberately provoked a tussle—unaware, poor things, of what three tough gobs can do in concert when they get good and mad.

Bottles flew, tables overturned on screaming dance-girls, shots rang out wildly, windows smashed, lights went out. A passing American marine patrol joined in and though still greatly inferior in numbers, the gobs tossed their opponents downstairs and generally plastered them around the café without resort to firearms. Then, linking arms, the hilarious visitors wisely decamped while the going was good.

It was a wise move, because a lorry load of Italians had been summoned by phone, and they rolled up in time to pick up their wounded and take them to hospital. One Eytie who had been thrown downstairs died next day, an unfortunate dance-girl was found dead under a table. The cabaret proprietor presented a bill a mile long to both sides, which was paid. “Blood Alley,” where the fracas took place, was put out of bounds for troops. . . .

I am glad those gobs got out before the Japs stepped in.

Among my preparations for departure came the necessary destruction of Tony, my areddale, whom I had carried home asleep in my hand when he was five weeks old. Now, at fourteen, with his old legs shaky, Australia would not have him as he came from the East, and at long last his vagabondage with me must come to an end.

Only twice had I left him, to go on Long Leave. The first time his inquiring, sideways-cocked face expressed his conviction that I was merely popping around the corner. But on the second occasion the quantity of my luggage must have betrayed me, and coming back to a half-filled suitcase I found him lying in it, on my neatly-folded clothes, his wistful whiskery face over the edge, watching and imploring me. . . . “I’m packed, Missie. PLEASE take me this time!”

So one very hot afternoon in late June an English vet called and gently inserted a hypodermic needle in a vein in his leg. Lazily Tony raised his head, then dropped it back between my caressing hands. Missie was there so everything must be all right; Missie who never let him down.

Gently the vet pressed the syringe. . . . It was done: gradually, with no pain, that valiant old heart had quietened. The supreme kindness, with its aspect of supreme betrayal, was consummated. I wrapped Tony in his rug, and a friend came in her car and drove me out to the pretty garden of yet another friend, where, under a graceful willow, his grave awaited him.

To distract my mind from that difficult deed, came the Mess. With so many wives and children of white people evacuated (by that time the big firms had all undertaken to evacuate dependents) the remaining husbands clustered

forlornly into the house of one of them, and formed a male household run on bachelor rules.

My particular Mess had just acquired a yacht, but as she was insufficiently equipped and I was just packing up to go, well, of course, I had a whole lot of odds and ends left over from housekeeping which came in useful. Remember those two Union Jacks I had bought when I evacuated my flat in 1937? Well, they came in useful, too, for the yacht had sailed before under a French flag.

Time drew in, life began to whirl; the tempo became confusing. Smallpox vaccination, cholera inoculation, four photos for the Dutch visa, one for the American, purchase of Dutch gulden, American notes, Australian pounds. Parties, dances, cocktails, shampoo; parcels to deliver on my way, Hongkong, Manila, Ilo Ilo.

Sailing date, of course, secret. But, right near the end, when I was all packed, an incident. The phone rang one evening. "We're coming round to talk about your Boy; we'd like to take him over as you say he's so good."

Two from the Mess, Dick, tall and lean, and Bertie, fat and pink. We had scarcely settled down to drinks when Dick started up and went to my balcony. "Someone down there honking on my horn, dammit, he's scratching my paint—" and Dick flew downstairs.

"After him, Dick's got the devil of a temper and they're armed," cried Bertie, so helter skelter after him we went.

It was the two gunmen from a puppet Chinese living nearly opposite. For no reason at all, except the desire to bully and throw their weight about, these two had objected to the place where Dick had parked. One of them was banging on the beautiful shiny car with a huge Mauser, the other was honking.

I just had time to hear Dick remonstrate in fluent Mandarin when something hard hit me in the middle of the back and I fell sprawling across the road just as a bus and other traffic came rolling along. I was lucky to escape that bus. I leapt to my feet, but before I could turn something hit me again on the side of my arm and down I went.

"You take care of the girl, I'll move the car," sang out Dick, and as I picked myself up Bertie interposed his burly form between me and my assailant and ran me across the road, where we waited for Dick. As we all safely gathered together again I said, "I think that means another drink."

Over the drink it was decided that I shouldn't sleep alone at my flat that night until some influence had been exerted to put the gunman in his place. So that night I slept in a strictly male household. . . .

Air mail from Sydney. "We will meet you; stay with us a week or two until you find your feet." Generous invitation, quietening that small voice of fear in the depths of my heart. Glorious to have friends; they stand by when you risk a leap in the dark.

More farewell parties, parcels to squash in somehow though there wasn't any more room, a last whirl of Shanghai's gayest spots ere I left. A large lift-van, labelled in letters a foot high M. C. MUNDAY SYDNEY trundled down the streets telling the general public that yet another white woman was pulling up anchor. A salvo of Chinese crackers interspersed with thunderous rockets dispersed devils of ill-luck and paid me the supreme compliment, as I drove away from my home, of demonstrating that Chinese were my friends.

The Shanghai skyline, an unambitious reflection of New York's, receded behind a forest of masts, junks, the idle bulk of the *Giulio Cesare* tied up since 1939, and the shabby Japanese flagship *Idzumo* on which washing flapped in a lazy breeze.



"You are wise to go, very wise." That had been dinned in my ears during the last weeks. "We might be coming along soon."

And as the good Dutch ship *Tjinegara* reached the Saddles, a radio voice known and loved over the Far Eastern network, broadcast a farewell for me to my pals. "See you in Sydney perhaps. Thanks for the grand send off. . . . Till we meet again. . . ."

The book of the Orient had fallen from my hands, half-read.

*War or its implications had finally fused me in impartial alchemy with Refugee Friend and Foe. Like those I had seen shouldering their worldly possessions to face the unknown I too fled. The Rice Bowl of one more, among countless millions, had been broken.*

THE END